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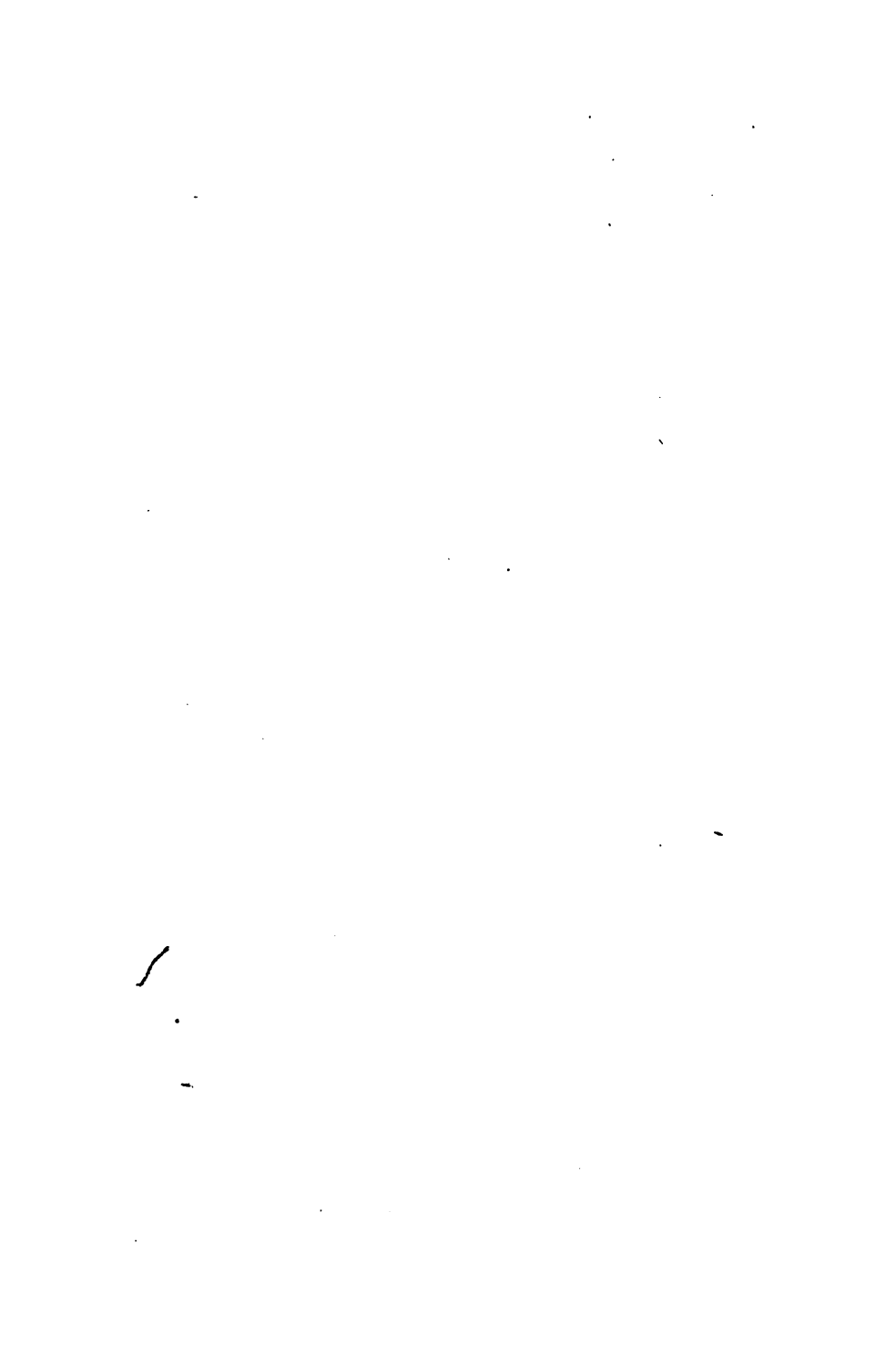


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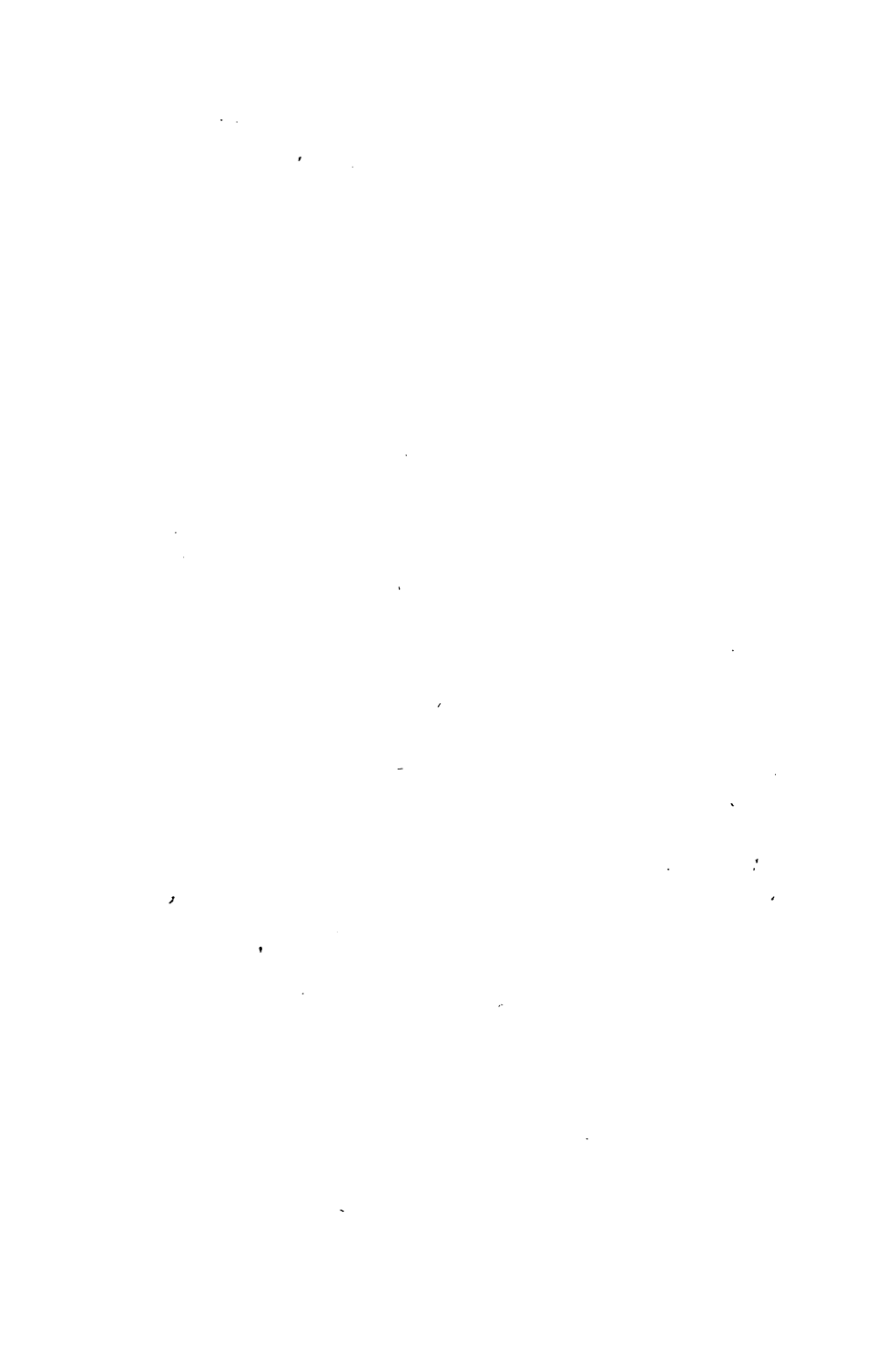


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SAILORS AND SAINTS;

OR,

MATRIMONIAL MANOEUVRES.

BY THE AUTHORS OF

THE "NAVAL SKETCH-BOOK."

There's life in't.

SHAKESPEARE.

W. N. Glascock,

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

New York:

PRINTED BY J. & J. HARPER, 82 CLIFF-ST.

SOLD BY COLLINS AND HANWAY, COLLINS AND CO., G. AND C. CARVILL,
A. T. GOODRICH, O. A. ROOREACH, E. BLISS, W. BURGESS, JR., N. B.
HOLMES, AND C. S. FRANCIS;—PHILADELPHIA, CAREY, LEA, AND
CAREY, AND JOHN GRIGG.

1829.

1848.32
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Duplicate money
(2 vol. 1.)

PREFACE.

THE success of a former production is, perhaps, the best apology for the appearance of another by the same authors. In publishing the present characteristic Tale, illustrative of scenes, manners, and sentiments, which must necessarily be novel to the far greater portion of society, it may be only requisite to say, that the authors have been encouraged to appear again before the public, by the indulgent and flattering reception the NAVAL SKETCH BOOK obtained in each edition.

Compared with the view of society contained in these pages, the former Work may perhaps have been considered too professional for some readers. In the present instance, the writers have endeavoured to consult the general taste, particularly that of the INFLUENTIAL FAIR, by presenting a story enlivened by the introduction of characters, to which parallels may have been found within the circle of almost every reader's society; with the exception of the veteran hero, whom the *cognoscenti* may be disposed to consider a *unique*.

In conclusion, it may be necessary to explain the reason why the authorship of the former Work was announced in the singular number. In some instances, the subjects examined were so strictly technical, that one of the parties, not being himself a naval man, felt a degree of diffidence in seeming to claim a share in originating several suggestions, which could only have been the fruit of intimate acquaintance with

the *minutiae* of the service. In the present instance, it has been deemed necessary partly to throw off the *incognito*; and as, among the conjectures which have been hazarded by reviewers and others, that Work has been confidently asserted to be the joint production of several professional men, the authors beg to assure the reader, that whatever merit their former, or their present Work may be considered to possess, it is not too much to be shared between two individuals—a NAVAL OFFICER and a TEMPLAR.

SAILORS AND SAINTS.

CHAPTER I.

L'OUVERTURE.

———A home returning bark—
Blow fair, thou breeze! she anchors ere the dark.
Already doubled is the cape—our bay
Receives the prow which proudly spurns the spray.
BYRON.

“A STRANGE sail, by all that’s brave:”—exclaimed old Captain Crank, as he had adjusted to his eye a favourite Dollond’s day-and-night telescope, which was handsomely mounted in the oriel window of one of the most compact neat cottages that graced the picturesque banks of the river Dart. Erected on rather an abrupt eminence above the cliff, this rural retreat commanded an almost boundless view of the English channel on three sides; save where it was intercepted, on the west, by the bold projection of the Start Point; a headland so often hailed with delight, as the harbinger of home, by the returning wanderer of the wave.

“Let me see,” continued the captain; “what—three reefs out o’ the taupsles* on a wind!—never did *that* in my time—don’t dream of the squall that ’ill catch him off the point—a younker, I warrant!—Shoud’nt wonder if his top-masts went over the side;—all comes of boys shipping swabs† before they shave.—Weather fore-taupsle-sheet not home by a fathom—jib stay in a bight, too—

* Topsails—the pronunciation of this word instantly detects the landsman.

† Mounting epaulettes, which in his day denoted a captain.

not a block to be seen low or aloft—bless my soul!—nor a hand in the chains!* She's ashore for a shilling."

But the subject of these testy criticisms soon assumed a very different appearance. It was true, that at the moment the veteran had pronounced her "jib-stay to be in a bight," and "her fore-topsail-sheet not home by a fathom," her crew were in the act of setting up the one, and "singling" the other,—the latter being a practice frequently adopted of late by officers for the purpose of clewing up the top sails with a celerity, which to either a novice, or one of the old school of seamen, had all the appearance of *legerdemain*. The critic could not fail to be in some degree surprised by the effect of this rapid evolution in "shortening sail;" and he had the further mortification of finding himself "out in his reckoning" as to another foreboding; for the vessel, with all her broad and lofty canvass spread, as if wooing the wind, not only stood into her anchorage in admirable style; but, to the evident mortification of the petulant prophet, took up a safe birth, suddenly clewing up every thing, in a position near enough to give the veteran a full view from his window, of her busy, but orderly deck.

The only auditors which this nautical Nestor had for his critical comments upon the rising generation of our seamen, were two female relatives, who constituted the whole of his fireside circle. The elder, a respectable middle-aged matron, the captain's sister-in-law; whose life had been sufficiently chequered to have imparted to her character all those chameleon hues, which result from a knowledge of the world. Of an ambitious disposition, though humble extraction, she had been principally indebted to a fair share of personal attractions for her establishment in life, if more than existence it might be called, whose daily inconveniences and perplexities were to be constantly encountered and defeated by shifts and evasions absolutely necessary to maintain appearances in the early stages of her husband's professional career. He had been a country attorney in a small town, where the spirit of litigation had been restrained by the potent spells of religious enthu-

* A leadsmen to ascertain the depth of water.

siam ; or, in other words, as most of its population were members of the same sect, their disputes were, too often for the attorney's interest, amicably adjusted by the intervention of the pulpit, rather than the woollack. It was not wonderful, therefore, that Crank's prize money should now and then be invested in other hands than those of the Commissioners of the Navy Four-per-Cents.

The worthy veteran continued for years to supply the wants of a brother, whose choice of a profession had been so unfortunate. A sense of dependence and degradation gradually brought on an apathy and distaste for life, from which the attorney vainly sought relief in the too frequent use of spirituous liquors ; and he paid the penalty of these culpable attempts to escape from the cares of the world, by an attack of apoplexy, which closed his career, without burdening his family by any regret for his loss. What had proved poison to her husband's temporal concerns, turned out a balm to the sorrows of his spouse—she became a convert to those principles whose influence had ruined the lawyer's practice ;—was frequent in her attendance at "meeting ;"—seldom seen at church ; and rose, as veterans ought in the forces, with her standing, through the different *grades* of "hearer," "convert," "class-sister," and "band-sister," until she became as constant in her attendance on the service at Zerubbabel Chapel, as the pillar which supported its pulpit.

The next in order of rank, though far above her in the estimation and affection of the veteran, was his niece. Raised to a sphere far beyond her early expectations by her kind-hearted uncle, who had adopted her on his brother's death, and completed her education at considerable expense ; Emily, like girls of any emulation, rose in spirit with her altered circumstances. She must have been dull indeed not to have perceived her own increased importance even while at school, in the deference and marked civilities of both mistress, teachers, and school-fellows, the moment she was recognised as the presumptive heiress of the retired old Ingee admiral, the title by which her uncle was usually designated.

Emily had acquired in the captain's society a competent acquaintance with sea terms to comprehend that the

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front, was compressed behind in a neatly tied *queue*, which, without disparagement to the perspicacity displayed by money-lenders in our time, might have been discounted at sight, for thousands, any day between three and five, on the Royal Exchange.—To prove that *Bellona* was no stepdame, she had complimented him by a scratch in the face (which lubbers would have denominated a frightful gash), inflicted by a splinter from a two-and-thirty pounder, as it winged its wanton way through the quarter deck bulwark of the R——r in Rodney's ever memorable victory. This, in those days, was a species of reminiscence of services, which was *somehow* very sillily appreciated by our officers, when the cheap distinctions of commemorative ribbons and medals were not the only blazonry of valorous achievements.

A blue coat, stand-up collar, long in the waist, a "square tuck," with kerseymere vest, ambitiously displaying on each button an anchor, the only exterior symbol of his profession; with a pair of blue "unmentionables," white fleecy stockings, and short black gaiters, composed the attire of the veteran.

Tiller completed a triumph on which Hogarth would have exercised his pencil with pleasure. He was a tough tar, so nearly his master's age, that the old gentleman, when in very good humour, used to joke with him familiarly on their close approximation in this respect, always affecting to forget who was the elder of the two.—They had entered the profession nearly at the same period of boyhood; had seen, therefore, nearly equal periods of service, for Tiller retired with his master.—Tom, too, had reaped his share of honours, as well as the veteran, having been for several years previously, a captain also—that is, of a *top*. He was of a spare habit, extremely bow-legged, small in the waist, and long in the arms; his eye (for he had but one, the other having been whisked out by the explosion of a powder-horn, when priming his carronade in action) always resting on his commander's; his complexion mahogany, enlivened with an odd streak here and there (particularly on the nose) of vermilion, and betokening long service in a variety of climates, as he contended—possibly, an undue preference to strong potations.—

He, too, sported a tolerable tail, which, on ordinary occasions, was bent up in a-bight; but, on Sundays and holydays, was uncoiled, and displayed in all its fair proportions.—He wore the ordinary dress of a sailor, marked by a scrupulous exactness; and a rigid attention to cleanliness, as an atonement for a peculiar feeling, which had well nigh robbed Camperdown cottage of not the least worthy of its inmates. This arose from an attachment to his profession, and old habits. In fact, no earthly consideration could have induced him to substitute a livery for the blue jacket and white trowsers of the tar. Indeed, when his mistress had alluded sometimes to the circumstance of his appearing in a gentleman's family so singularly attired, Tiller uniformly accompanied the remark with an unconscious stare, as if ignorant of her meaning, and an obvious anxiety to leave the room; though the next morning, while dressing his master, he never neglected to signify his unalterable dislike to the proposed innovation, by alluding to an intention he had long cherished, though as often postponed, to give up service, and go into the country to see his friends.—This would have been to Crank a separation of soul and body, so that Tiller was sure to gain his object, and the point was decided by the captain at last jocosely observing to his sister, that “it was quite out of the question, to expect a square-rigged craft, like Tom, ever to bend a fore-and-aft suit of sails.”

The above sketches from the life will suffice to introduce to the reader's acquaintance a few of the *dramatis personæ* who figure in these volumes.

CHAPTER II.

JOINING CO.

Many unworthy man sacrifices his peace to formalities.

L'ESTRANGE.

THE garden walk terminated with a gate opening into a steep ravine, richly planted and arched overhead, which rather abruptly descended to the shore. At some distance beneath the umbrageous foliage, two figures were seen slowly winding up the ascent. The dim light which pervaded this hollow way threw them farther into perspective than might have been imagined from the distinctness with which their conversation reached the ears of our party. The subject was rather startling to the dignity of the old gentleman, accustomed as he was to the more stately demeanour, and reserved habits of officers in his day. It seemed to refer to himself; and the observation had called forth a laugh from the superior, as he conjectured, at his expense. Nor did the officer (for it now evidently appeared the couple approaching belonged to the brig) seem to be one of those likely to exact much deference from his attendant, who, notwithstanding, kept, out of respect for his superior, a little better than "a boat-hook's length in his wake."

"Perhaps, Sir," said the inferior, closing up abreast of his officer, and who happened to be bow-man of the boat, which had not long landed from the brig, "Perhaps, Sir, as I draw less water nor you, it might n't be amiss to let me lead through the narrows."

"Why, Jones, you're as cautious as a Portuguese pilot," returned the officer; "surely we've no danger to dread."

"I does n't know *that*, Sir;—it's as well to sound as we go.—If you takes my advice, Sir, you'd 'connitre the old boy afore we board him in the smoke."

"I admire your prudence ; but pray, Jones, why the precaution ? The old gentleman appears to have hoisted his colours in compliment to the brig's putting into port ; and it's not likely that an old officer would turn his back on a blue-jacket, or shut his doors against a sailor."

"Why, I hope you're not out in your reck'ning, Sir ;—but you see, Sir," said the tar, assuming the air of one endowed 'with a learned spirit of human dealings ;' "you see, Sir, when a man's a long time out o' commission, he can't help getting, as a body may say,—shore-hardened a bit—a touch o' the two ways wi' him—heaves in, you know, Sir, when he means to stick-out ;—and polite enough to ax you to freshen your nip, when at the same time he'd as soon give you a drop of his blood as a drop of his bottle."

"Probably so ; but I make it a rule never to distrust the cloth ; and, to its honour be it said, I've never yet been deceived. But, hollo ! who have we here ?"

"The commodore, by all that's blue !" said the bowman, who had previously learned from the fishermen on the beach the appellation by which the veteran was known in the neighbourhood. "Oh, it's him, Sir, as sure as a gun, for here's the gate close aboard ; he's overhauled us for sartin."

"Well, Sir," said the other, elevating his voice sufficiently to reach distinctly the person it was meant to conciliate, "he can have heard nothing of which he or I have any reason to be ashamed."

He had hardly time to put his hand to his hat, and salute the party, ere the old gentleman accosted him with an obviously constrained familiarity :—

"Your humble servant, Sir.—I presume the brig brought up below is yours ?"

"I have the honour to belong to her," replied the officer.

"Belong to her ?—you mean she *belongs* to you.—Well, Sir,—you're welcome to the port.—My niece here prevailed on me to come down to meet you ; though, I assure you, I was not over inclined to start tack or sheet.—We *liners*, you know, are not in the habit of leading small craft into their anchorage."

"I feel more sensibly the compliment from its having originated with the lady," said the stranger, bowing gracefully to Emily, "but the fact is, I have been sent by Captain Staunch to a——"

"Sent!" interrupted Crank, in a tone of surprise—"volunteered you mean?—You're superseded, I suppose?"

"I hope not, Sir."

"Hope not!—Gad, had you been served as I was—kept knocking about the North Seas the standing-part of a winter's cruize after you were *posted*,* you would n't object to your successor's joining so soon."

"You labour, I rather think, Sir, under some misapprehension, attributable to my wearing an epaulette. Perhaps, Sir, you have not been apprised of the recent change in the uniform?"

"Change in the uniform!—what change?—My niece here generally overhauls the newspapers very sharply, and neither of us have read any thing of the matter—have we, child?"

"Pardon me, Sir," said he, "a considerable change has taken place. The same uniform which hitherto distinguished a post-captain under three years' standing, now denotes the rank of lieutenant."

"What, Sir, you don't mean to say that the lufftackle† has shipped the *swab*?"

"Yes, Sir, and on the right shoulder."

"Ha! ha! ha!—the service is going headlong to the devil! Then, of course, the wash-boards‡ are shipped by the reefer.§ And so, after all, I'm addressing *only* a lieutenant!—is it so, eh?"

"At your service, Sir, only lieutenant, and even *second* lieutenant of His Majesty's sloop *Spitfire*."

"D——n it, this is the devil's own take-in, my dear," said Crank to Emily, aside.—"Pray, Sir, may I ask your name?"

"Burton, Sir."

"Burton! Burton!—surely you can't be son to my old

* Made post-captain.

† Lieutenant.

‡ White facings of the uniform coat, formerly indicating the rank of lieutenant.

§ Midshipman.

messmate, Bob Burton, who served as second in the *Boyne*?—But, no; I remember, like myself, he kept his text through life, never to be hampered with a rib—so that can't be, except to be sure,—a side wind."

He might, perhaps, have pursued the subject farther, notwithstanding Emily had disengaged her arm from his to occupy herself in unnecessarily adjusting a very delicate and faultless specimen of shoe-tie, had not the frown which he saw fast gathering on the lieutenant's brow recalled the old gentleman to a sense of the impropriety of pushing this species of equitable dubiety farther as to the parentage of a perfect stranger. He hastened to resume the subject;—luckily, the catch-word suggested itself—"Burton, Burton;—well, and pray, Mr. Burton, if it be a fair question," continued the veteran, "how comes it that as *second* lieutenant, you are the first officer to land from the brig?—I suppose, in those sort of small craft, there are no more cats than catch mice.—A *brig*, you know, Sir, is not like a battle-ship.—To be sure, in my day, the *second* lieutenant of a liner was considered as a sort of spare-topmast, that lay idle on the booms as long as the *first* was standing;—but times, I perceive, have terribly changed—terribly, indeed."

Though Emily in some measure shared in her uncle's mortification at finding, as he had so unceremoniously expressed it, that all this while he had been addressing *only* a lieutenant; her deportment obviously betrayed even to a careless observer, that a considerable degree of interest had been already excited by the rencontre. Nor was this at all surprising.—Taking her uncle as a specimen of the profession, whose temper, notwithstanding his goodness of heart, was crabbed, and whose manner and conversation, harsh and dictatorial, she was agreeably surprised by the unaffected manners, easy affability, and prepossessing appearance of the young officer; and this surprise might, perhaps, best interpret the meaning of those furtive glances of her fine dark eyes, which were directed towards him at intervals, when she imagined, from his being engaged in conversation with her uncle, there was little danger of her being detected.

To keep the veteran no longer in suspense as to the ob-

ject of his mission, Burton proceeded to acquaint him that he came ashore specially for the purpose of ascertaining whether fresh provisions and water were to be conveniently obtained in the neighbourhood?—"We have, Sir," said he, "just returned from a cruize off Scilly,—and—seeing St. George's ensign flying at the flag-staff—"

"Flag-staff, young man!" interrupted Crank, "I'll have you know that *flag-staff*, as you call it, is the main-to'-gallant-mast of a six-and-thirty gun frigate, and no *capper-bar** either. D——n it, where are your eyes, Sir?—Don't you see she's a reg'lar fidded royal-mast, cross-trees and all complete?—I'll answer for it, the stay and shrouds are made of a better piece of two-and-a-half hawser-laid stuff than any you can sport in your a—what d'ye call her, Sir?"

"The *Spitfire*," replied the lieutenant coolly, who perceived he had a testy customer to deal with.

"The *Spitfire*, eh?—built since my time.—Well, and so you say this *Spitfire*—(gad, you've got her black enough to call her the *Belzebub*—zounds! girl, don't be treading on my toes,) and so you've only come into port to replenish your water?—you're sure nothing else?—*captain* not sick o' the cruize, eh?—old stationer, you know—up to *these* sort o' rigs."

"Sir, it would not become me to dispute that such may be the result of your own experience; but it would become me less, tamely to acquiesce in any undeserved censure on the conduct of my commander;" and, with a graceful inclination of the head towards Emily, he continued, "Nor would it be just to the profession or to yourself, to omit reminding you that this censure is levelled against the most devoted protectors of the sex."

"Holloa, young man,—touchy as tinder!—What tack are we on now?—got hold of a sea-lawyer it seemm. However, I like your spirit in sticking up for the discipline of the service. Respect your superiors—that's my maxim;—had it painted on the break of the *Grampus's* poop."

* As this will be perfectly well understood by those who are interested in the honour of the service, and in keeping the secret, it shall, for the sake of the veteran, never be explained in a note of ours.

"Well, Sir," said the lieutenant, "as duty never admits of delay, perhaps you will have the politeness to oblige me with your assistance?"

"Certainly, Sir, every officer in His Majesty's navy is entitled to my good offices, especially on a point of service. If you're determined not to make for the cottage; my man, Tiller here, shall step to the best butcher in the place, and order him to comply with your 'purser's demand.' By-the-by, how is 't he did n't land himself to look after his own business? In my time, *Nipcheese** would have considered it as good as a re-capture to have had such an opportunity of contracting with the butcher."

Being made acquainted that this duty had been assigned to the lieutenant in consequence of the indisposition of the purser, Crank proceeded to point out the best watering-place in the vicinity, adding that, "If it does not interfere with your duty, perhaps you'll take a family dinner with us—eight bells, you know, to a minute," continued Crank, pulling out his watch, and comparing it with Burton's.

The lieutenant politely made his acknowledgments, giving his assurance that nothing would afford him greater pleasure; but intimated that, as he was on duty, his compliance would depend upon obtaining leave from his captain.

"Perhaps, Sir," said Emily, "we may have the additional pleasure of your captain's company?"

"Why, I don't exactly know what to say to *that*, my dear;" said Crank.—"I know, in my time, it was n't quite according to Cocker, for a captain and *lieutenant* to dine together ashore—but be that as it may, Sir—make our compliments—no force, you know—a volunteer's worth two pressed men—say, if he comes, glad to see him—hearty welcome, and all that sort o' thing. You may depend on it, there's some capital stuff in the store-room."

Bowing to both, Burton informed them that the accident which afforded him the pleasure of this introduction, would, he feared, prevent his commander partaking in their hospitality. "It was but the other day," he said,

* Nickname for purser.

“that the captain had a narrow escape, by the falling of a block from aloft: fortunately, however, it only fell on his foot; but the contusion is sufficiently severe to confine him to his cabin.”

“Aye, aye! nothing but negligence—now that’s a thing *I* never would forgive—a block or marlinspike falling from aloft, was always three dozen in my time.”

This hint seemed to be little relished by the lieutenant’s attendant, who, turning up the whites of his eyes, muttered, in an almost audible tone—“Precious times them!—suppose a poor fellow fell from aloft, dare say they’d a brought him to, a reg’lar-built court martial, if he had n’t the good fortun to fall on his pate and knock out his brains.”

“Talking of blocks falling from aloft, reminds me,” said Crank, “of a sad accident which happened aboard the *Ramilies*—*Ramilies*?—let’s see, was’t the *Ramilies*, or the *Boyne*?—right, the *Ram*; because now I remember, ’t was just after I became *first* of the former.—Well, you must know, Sir, one day, in a general chase to windward—cracking on as much as ever we could stagger under tripple-reefed taupsles and courses—a cursed cross-sea running—taking it in clean over all—”

Here Emily, aware, from experience, of the probable prolixity of her uncle’s stories, whenever he commenced to touch on technicals with so formidable a flourish as “tripples-reefs—cross-seas—and cracking on canvass,” correctively placed her hand on her uncle’s sleeve, reminding him, the “the gentleman had to repair on board, and, if he expected him to return to dinner, he had better reserve the catastrophe until they again met;” a hint which was gladly followed by the lieutenant politely taking leave, for the present, and expressing a hope that he should be favoured with that anecdote, or any other fruits of his experience, when he had the pleasure to rejoin them.

According to this arrangement, the officer, now accompanied by Tiller and the bowman, descended to the beach to examine the watering-place. The one-eyed tar having pointed out the road, the lieutenant preceded his companions, neither of whom were remarkable for taciturnity. Indeed, from the first moment, each had eyed the other

with a secret determination to exchange shots in a civil conversational way, having gradually slackened their pace, so as to fall into the rear, and to get out of hearing, when the bowman thus broke silence—

"I say, shipmate—what sort of a birth have you got on it here?—A rum rating—I take it?"

"Rum as it is, I reckon it's better nor A. B.* aboard a man-o'-war."

"Well, I did n't say the birth was a bad un—for tho' you've a fiddled stick† there, stepped on the top o' the hill. I take it you seldom shin up to rig the upper royal-yard arm?"

"Why, no,"—retorted Tiller;—"we don't cross broom-sticks here;—tho' we've eight hours in of a night, we've something else to do in the day."

"There, now, that's what I've been just a thinking;" said the bowman, who was quite a match for Tom in good-humoured retort—"and what's more, from what I overhears just now, I take it the old gemman's rather a taut hand in a watch;—he'd sooner, I reckon, sarve-out *three dozen*, nor double allowance?"‡

"Why, for the matter o' that, he could sarve out *both* to them as desarved it."

"Well,—there's never no denying but some o' the sim'lar sort have their good pints, as well as their bad uns."

"Pints," said Tiller,—assuming an air of importance—"he's as many pints as the compass, if you only knew how to box 'em.—I knows his trim better nor most, and take him, *by*, or large, you'll not find his match in a million.—The gout, to be sure, sometimes sets him a snarling, when it makes him lie by with his legs in limbo;—and he's not over pleased when his sister-in-law—a sort o' ~~the~~ clargyman—tarns to a preaching, and tries to gammon the old man out of a Newland,§ for divarting the Jews, as she calls it;—but the breeze once over, the sea soon goes down.—Well! but I say—that seems a crack craft o' your's!" added Tom, assuming a livelier tone.

"You may say that, my bo," said the younger tar, "when you next write home to your friends.—The very

* A. B.—Able seaman.

‡ In allusion to double allowance of grog.

† A flag-staff.

§ A bank note.

barkey as can run in the guns—send down royal and to'—gallant yards—hoist the boats in, and pipe the hammocks down all in the same breath."

"And in course, sarve out slops too, at the *same* time," returned Tiller, thinking that his companion was drawing upon his credulity.—"But, I say, how is't you've got her black and all black?"

"There's the beauty on her!—why, d'ye think *she's* like a lady, as wants paint and ribbons* to show-off her sheer?—did you ever see a swan sit prouder in a pond?" said the bowman, pointing to the vessel at her anchorage—"I wish you could only see her gilt stars astern—look at her figure-head, glittering like a guinea in the sun, as much as to say—'there's take the shine.'—T'wig her bottom, as bright as a new-coined copper:—that's scudding, not *scouring*,† old boy!—Look at her bulging bow—grad'ally swelling from the earfus up—for all the world like a lady's bosom, shored-up by a taut pair o' stays.—See her sticks,‡ how they stand—stayed to an affigraphy;§—there's yards, for you—as square as a die;—did you ever see such white and well-stowed hammocks afore?"

"Oh, the craft's very well," said Tiller,—("Right-a-head, Sir!") sung out Thomas, perceiving the lieutenant now at a loss for his way to the stream)—"the craft's very well herself—but—"

"But—but *what* now?" interrupted Tiller's companion; "if you could only haul up the lid o' your t'other top-light, you'd *see* she was *more* nor well."

"Come—come—steady a bit—right your helm—you needn't be in such an infarnal taking—I was only going to ax—what sort of officers you' a-got."

"Officers?—why there's not a bad-un abroad—the skipper's a sailor himself,—and what's more, a sailor's friend—his face's like a summer's morn, it smiles on every thing it looks."

* The painted mouldings along a ship's side are termed, in nautical language, ribbons.

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‡ Masts.

§ A sailor's term for a nicety.—"Exactness."—As little reason, perhaps, can be given for the use of the term in this sense, as for calling a beverage, made out of burnt biscuit and water "Ge-o-graphy."

"D——n your smilers—I can't abide 'em—I'd put as much trust in a smiler as I would,—aye, in a compass-card nailed to the deck."

"Well, but I tells you he 's none o' the sort—he 's none o' your chaps as 'ave always a smile on their mug for a lady ashore, and a frown on their phiz for a fellow afloat."

"But *is* he a fellow," said Tiller, "as is always the same?—can stand up, as well under his canvass on one tack as t'other?—none o' your skipper for me as are pleased in port and savage at sea—I 've seen enough o' them sort o' chaps, as are only polite among petticoats.—Where was two fancier fellows wi' the women nor P——— and P———? see them a taunto, in their shore-going togs, and you 'd swear, from their bowing and scraping, and sending for'ard their pates, as they stuck out their starns, they were a pair o' your reg'lar-built, parlee-voo hop-kickers—But get 'em once in blue water—once out o' their sweet scented suds, and see what a Billingsgate battery they 'd open on all as comed under their fire."

"But damn it, man, doesn't I tell you," returned the bowman, rather warmly, "that he 's none o' the sort at all?"

"Well, then—what sort are the rest o' your officers?—kase, you know, one chafed strand 's enough to condemn a whole cable.—(Straight on, under the cliff, Sir," said Tiller, again hailing the lieutenant)—"what sort o' chaps are they?"

"Why, there 's the first lieutenant, to be sure, gets sometimes a-head of his reck'ning—does things hand over hand, in a hurry—but *there 's* the boy," said the bowman, pointing to Burton, who was too far a-head to overhear their conversation—"that 's the boy as can box the brig about—he can do more wi' the watch than t'other could do with all hands—He 's the smartest young fellow I ever see'd in my day, and never axes a man to do more nor he can *do* himself.—I 'members one morn. lying moored at Spithead, when the first lieutenant was ashore on leave, and he was left *dicky* aboard, and, bekase we wasn't *first*, as usual, in crossing to gallant yards—may I never see light if he didn't send the sticks up and down thirteen times,

afore he piped to breakfast—and the twelfth time, he go so vexed (what no man afore ever seed in the ship) tha he sings out to Bob Law, the second captain of the fore top, as was rigging the upper yard-arm at the time—‘Either you or me,’ says he, ‘Mister Law, ’s a tailor.’—‘I sarved my time to the sea,’ says Bob. —‘Then the sea sarved out a *lubber*,’ says t’other—what puts Bob, you know, so much on his pluck, that, singing out loud enough for all hands to hear him aboard, ‘I ’d like,’ says Bob, ‘to see the fellow ~~at~~ the fleet, as could rig an upper-yard-arm smarter nor me.’—‘You *would*, would ye?’ says the leaf tenant, with the blood flying up in his face—‘Here Stowel,’ says he to the master, ‘send the yards up,’ says he, and flying for’ard, he flings off his coat on one of the guns, runs aloft like a lamplighter, and afore he gets fairly a foot in the top, he sings out, ‘sway away, master, damn it, don’t wait for *me*, man!’ Well, you know, tho’ there wasn’t a man in the brig that wouldn’t go further, aye further than Fidler’s Green for him—still, it wasn’t in natur, you know, to let poor Bob be beat by a gemman—so, you see, they make the devil’s own run with the yard rope, to sway the upper-yard arm out of his fist, but he was too sharp for ’em all—for he bevelled it so well at the mast head, as he held the lift-and-brace in both hands, that the stick flew thro’ ’em just like a fair leader—and there was the fore-to-’gallant yard across, aye, half-a-minute afore the main was rigged.”

“Well,” said Tiller, “I suppose Mr. Law, as you call him, looked a bit blue?”

“Why, you may suppose he dropped his peak, as soon as the lieutenant comes down on deck, and says, with a sort of swagger, ‘There, my man, you *see*,’ says he, ‘you see, I never axes another to do what I couldn’t do *better* myself!’—‘Well,’ says Bob, cheering up a bit, so as to clinch the concern at once, ‘I declare to my God, Sir,’ says he, ‘I axes your pardon, but I didn’t think ’twas in mortal man to beat Bob Law at any thing aloft—and I’m blowed,’ said he, ‘if I turn my back to another in the fleet ’sides yourself.’—I doesn’t know whether this palaver o’ Bob’s pleases the lieutenant or no, but I knows, ever since, they’ve both taken together as nat’ral as brandy and water.”

They had now reached the watering-place, and the lieutenant expressed himself satisfied with its appearance. Observing to the bowman that it would require no great length of hose to fill the casks, he speedily rejoined the boat's crew on the beach, and pulled for the brig.

CHAPTER III.

DANDYISM.

—————The first request
He made, was, like his brothers to be dress'd.
DRYDEN.

ALREADY all was activity on board. The yawl and cutter had been hoisted out off the booms, and filled with breakers (let not the landsmen be alarmed) and empty casks. The crews had been piped away by order of the senior lieutenant, and the movement was only interrupted by the ringing of the captain's bell, and the appearance of the orderly, requesting the attendance of the lieutenant in the cabin.

It was remarked of the commander, that whenever accident or indisposition prevented his doing the duties of his station, in person, he was more particularly tenacious that those, on whom it devolved, should strictly adhere to the maxims he had laid down for the government of the brig, in almost every possible case. Acquainted with every detail of duty, he had often felt the harassing inconvenience to which men, and the best men, are often put, by the want of foresight and method evinced by officers in the most ordinary points of service. To meet emergencies of this nature, he had formed a brief code of regulations, applicable to his own ship's company. His anxiety to attain a high state of discipline, and at the same time ensure the comforts of his crew, induced him continually to make additions.—Still, much was necessarily left to the

"I feel more sensibly the compliment from its having originated with the lady," said the stranger, bowing gracefully to Emily, "but the fact is, I have been sent by Captain Stauneh to a——"

"Sent!" interrupted Crank, in a tone of surprise—"volunteered you mean?—You're superseded, I suppose?"

"I hope not, Sir."

"Hope not!—Gad, had you been served as I was—kept knocking about the North Seas the standing-part of a winter's cruize after you were *posted*,* you would n't object to your successor's joining so soon."

"You labour, I rather think, Sir, under some misapprehension, attributable to my wearing an epaulette. Perhaps, Sir, you have not been apprised of the recent change in the uniform?"

"Change in the uniform!—what change?—My niece here generally overhauls the newspapers very sharply, and neither of us have read any thing of the matter—have we, child?"

"Pardon me, Sir," said he, "a considerable change has taken place. The same uniform which hitherto distinguished a post-captain under three years' standing, now denotes the rank of lieutenant."

"What, Sir, you don't mean to say that the lufftackle† has shipped the *swab*?"

"Yes, Sir, and on the right shoulder."

"Ha! ha! ha!—the service is going headlong to the devil! Then, of course, the wash-boards‡ are shipped by the reefer.§ And so, after all, I'm addressing *only* a lieutenant!—is it so, eh?"

"At your service, Sir, only lieutenant, and even *second* lieutenant of His Majesty's sloop *Spitfire*."

"D——n it, this is the devil's own take-in, my dear," said Crank to Emily, aside.—"Pray, Sir, may I ask your name?"

"Burton, Sir."

"Burton! Burton!—surely you can't be son to my old

* Made post-captain.

† Lieutenant.

‡ White facings of the uniform coat, formerly indicating the rank of lieutenant,

§ Midshipman.

messmate, Bob Burton, who served as second in the *Boyne*?—But, no ; I remember, like myself, he kept his text through life, never to be hampered with a rib—so that can't be, except to be sure,—a side wind."

He might, perhaps, have pursued the subject farther, notwithstanding Emily had disengaged her arm from his to occupy herself in unnecessarily adjusting a very delicate and faultless specimen of shoe-tie, had not the frown which he saw fast gathering on the lieutenant's brow recalled the old gentleman to a sense of the impropriety of pushing this species of equitable dubiety farther as to the parentage of a perfect stranger. He hastened to resume the subject ;—luckily, the catch-word suggested itself—"Burton, Burton ;—well, and pray, Mr. Burton, if it be a fair question," continued the veteran, "how comes it that as *second* lieutenant, you are the first officer to land from the brig ?—I suppose, in those sort of small craft, there are no more cats than catch mice.—A *brig*, you know, Sir, is not like a battle-ship.—To be sure, in my day, the *second* lieutenant of a liner was considered as a sort of spare-top-mast, that lay idle on the booms as long as the *first* was standing ;—but times, I perceive, have terribly changed—terribly, indeed."

Though Emily in some measure shared in her uncle's mortification at finding, as he had so unceremoniously expressed it, that all this while he had been addressing *only* a lieutenant ; her deportment obviously betrayed even to a careless observer, that a considerable degree of interest had been already excited by the rencontre. Nor was this at all surprising.—Taking her uncle as a specimen of the profession, whose temper, notwithstanding his goodness of heart, was crabbed, and whose manner and conversation, harsh and dictatorial, she was agreeably surprised by the unaffected manners, easy affability, and prepossessing appearance of the young officer ; and this surprise might, perhaps, best interpret the meaning of those furtive glances of her fine dark eyes, which were directed towards him at intervals, when she imagined, from his being engaged in conversation with her uncle, there was little danger of her being detected.

To keep the veteran no longer in suspense as to the ob-

torrid zone, and therefore better able by "natur" to bear the burning fervours of a galley-fire in the dog-days.

From reflections far less philosophical than the preceding, our lieutenant was aroused by hearing the bell strike seven.*

"What! Powers that be! is that seven bells?—only half an hour to rig and run ashore.—Come, Lively," said he to his boy, who had reluctantly relinquished his post of honour to another youngster—"Come,—send the barber aft in a minute."

"Aye, aye, Sir," said the same loquacious top-man, who happened to be standing at the fore part of the steerage passage, and who appeared to be one of those "privileged men," or rather licensed wits, that may be found in every ship in the service.—"Pass the word there for 'Lathering Bob.'—Tell him to bear a hand aft: the second leaftenant wants his muzzle-lashing off in a crack."

"I'll muzzle you, Sir," said Burton, "if I hear any more of that sort of *singing out* about the decks;" when, retiring to the gun-room, he continued, as he rummaged his pockets, "I say, steward, did you see my keys any where?—But it's ever the way when one's in a hurry.—Come, Mister Purser, no tricks upon travellers;—these sort of practical jokes are very well in a midshipman's birth;—besides, they are but a poor recompense for my performance of your duty."

"My duty!" replied the purser, in a cynical tone,—
"I'm on the doctor's list.—Some one must have taken the 'demand' for beef on shore, or we should have had no fresh grub to have stopped your grumbling mouth."

"Pleaze, Sir, all the black'ng's out this week past," interrupted Burton's domestic, drawing out his words monosyllabically.

This intelligence was quickly succeeded by another of almost as pleasing a nature.—The marine to whose fostering charge the lieutenant's holyday inexpressibles had been consigned, appeared at the gun-room door with a woful face, and, preluding with a scratch of the head, reported—"The pantaloons, Sir, are rather out o' con-

* Seven bells, half-past three.

dition. They must have been put by wet and got mildewed. Besides, Sir, here's an ugly blotch of port wine in front. I've been trying to coax it out with a little hot pipe-clay, but I can't come it. I was thinking, if so be, Sir, as you must wear 'em, that you'd better keep a small bit of pipe-clay in your pocket, and touch 'em now and again as soon as they gets dry enough; but you'd better let them be, till you gets in the wind."

"In the wind!—curse you, I believe you're all in the wind."

Some one with hurried foot came tumbling down the after ladder, and announced. "Sir, there's a whiff* flying ashore, and the first lieutenant thinks it for you."

The rapid announcement of one calamity after the other, (for calamities they must all be considered by a man in a hurry,) strongly reminded him of the perplexities of that pattern of patience mentioned in sacred history, and he resolved to bear all his misfortunes with the equanimity of his parallel; but unluckily this composure was destined to be short lived, for in his eagerness to expedite his dressing, he the next moment thrust his heel right through his stocking. The weight of his woes, aggravated by this additional interruption, overcame all his self-possession, and with a hearty imprecation he shouted out, "What next?—any more of *Job's* comforters?"

Irritated as he was by these occurrences, what must have been the effect produced on his too sensitive ear by the report of a gun, or, as ladies would donominate it, a cannon from the shore? Another of the messengers aluded to, determined not to lose this too fortunate opportunity of trying his temper, "sung down" the sky-light, "Mr. Hasty says *that's* for you, Sir, and you'll be too late for dinner."

The report of the gun was echoed by a crash below, arising from the violent contact with the beams above of a boot-jack, which lay too conveniently close to the hand of the irritated lieutenant, as he hove it at the messenger's head, exclaiming, "and *that's* for you, young fellow."

* Whiff.—An ensign tied up transversely, so as to fly folded up at the extremity nearest to the mast, or flag-staff.

The pantaloons were again exhibited, while Lively prostrated the tawney-coloured boots at his feet. This was too much for his philosophy. It was impossible, he thought, to make his appearance before the sex in such shabby attire. Not a lawyer's clerk at assizes—not a barber's apprentice parading Hyde Park on a Sunday—or a Jew rigged out on the shabbash in some of his best saleable second-hand clothes, thought he, but must appear more gay and debonair in the eyes of the sex.

"D——n it," cried Hasty, opening the sky-light hatch, "you're as long bedizening as a bride, and all for that old buffer on the hill. One would think you were bracing up for a ball; or rigging out for a levee of syrens.—Come, better bear a hand, the people are going to supper presently, and then we won't be able to spare you a boat."

"Spare!" said Burton, "that's just *like* you; it's long before you'd spare one *even* a bottle of blacking, and when I do go on shore, (which is seldom enough,) I *should* like to support the character of the cloth."

"Well—rather than have a cannonading from the old boy's battery ashore, I'll rig you out to the nines. But here we have it," continued Hasty, moving from the sky-light, and pointing his glass out of one of the port-holes, in the direction of the cottage—"here we have it, for there comes the gunner with a red-hot poker."

Having so said, he despatched his servant for the necessary essentials for Burton, premising in a whisper—"By no means let him have my best shore-going swab."

This intimation given with respect to the poker, was no false alarm, for the conclusion of Hasty's speech was accompanied by a reverberation of echoes from the neighbouring hills, which sufficiently testified that much longer delay would be fatal to the festivities of the evening.

"What a provoking hurry!" cried Burton.

"On deck there!" cried the captain, through his sky-light, which was usually kept open when the weather was fine—"What guns are those firing?—Any thing in distress in the offing?"

"No, Sir!" replied Hasty, "only Mr. Burton in distress for time and togs—I've relieved him from one embarrassment—perhaps you'll extricate him from another."

and save time, by allowing the gig to land him. Indeed, it may be best for ourselves," added the first lieutenant, rather drily; "for the old gentleman ashore seems so peppery, I should 'nt wonder if the next gun was shotted!"

"Come, Hasty," said the captain, "that's rather a wild conjecture—but it's not fair to taunt poor Burton; he may yet have the laugh against you. Man the gig, and land him at once, and tell him to say something civil to the old gentleman for me."

With one spring from his cabin-door, on to the gun-room table; a vault upon deck, aided by the rim of the sky-light, he hastily descended the brig's side, and jumped into the boat, ere she had been completely manned. But his flight was not unattended by defeat; for the boat had hardly reached her destination half-way, when he thought he perceived the coxswain eyeing his dress with a significant look, as if he had detected his borrowed plumage.

"Why, coxswain," said Burton, "you seem to be overhauling my rigging very closely,—is there any thing amiss?"

"I does n't exactly know, Sir; but it looks to me, Sir, as if you'd carried away the weather topping-lift of your trowsers—the lee-leach, you see, Sir, is as slack as water."

"Curse it, if I hav'n't carried away my braces springing up that infernal sky-light.—Back water your starboard oars—no, avast there—give way again—won't do to go back to the brig—I'll make shift with one o'yours."

"*Mine*, Sir!" said the coxswain, startled at the lieutenant's entertaining the idea that a sailor ever wore a suspender in his life—" *Mine*, Sir! I hope you don't take me for a soger, Sir! I never wants any thing to keep the eyes of *my* rigging from slipping down over the hounds o' the mast. But here's a bit o' rope yard in the bottom o' the boat."

"Why, Bill," said the bowman, "there's a piece of dry parcelling in the locker abaft, as 'ill make a good preventer-brace on a pinch."

"That's right, Jones," said the lieutenant, brightening up at the bowman's suggestion—"that's right, my man—put me in mind to-morrow to give you a glass of grog for the thought."

barkey as can run in the guns—send down royal and to'-gallant yards—hoist the boats in, and pipe the hammocks down all in the same breath."

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CHAPTER III.

THE COTTAGE.

A ship's a sailor's house, d'ye see.
Sea Song.

THERE was a peculiarity in the construction of the cottage, which, however at variance with the prevailing taste in architecture, harmonized precisely with the wants and wishes of its proprietor. The apartments were all on the ground floor, Crank having, as he expressed it, served so long in a *liner*, and being so sickened of tumbling down hatchways, and trotting up ladders, that he was determined to end his days under a single-decked roof, and to have every thing in it flush fore-and-aft; in which sentiment, if such it may be called, every officer who has served on board a similar ship, will assuredly sympathize.

The dining and drawing rooms communicated with each other; but their occasional separation, which, in any other man's house, would have been effected by doors, were here accomplished, at the proprietor's express desire, by what he termed two "*sliding gunters*." These were pannels running in grooves within the walls, and were constructed of massive mahogany—Crank asserting that "thick bulk-heads were, in many respects, very conducive to comfort, not only keeping out wind and weather, but what, in his mind, was of greater importance—'woman's talk.'"

The furniture in these rooms was arranged with that nautical nicety so peculiar to the profession. The chairs were of a cottage pattern; but where the votary of music would have preferred a lyre, the spirit of the tar broke out in substituting for their backs the more appropriate emblem of the "foul anchor," which in either morning visits, or after dinner, frequently furnished an illustrative topic for the information of his rustic and gaping visitors. The

floor, as is usual in admirals' cabins, was covered with green baize; and a splendid "Union Jack," worked in worsted by the hands of the fair Emily, served the ostensible purpose of a rug, and concealed the inhospitable hearth.—Inhospitable—it however was; for Crank had a seaman's prejudice on the subject, and would not for worlds have suffered friend or foe to tread on it. The preservation of this singular regulation was pregnant with much difficulty, and an occasional remonstrance from his sister as to its absurdity, with respect to a hearth-rug; which, in all other houses, she argued was the very centre of social comfort. To this his constant rejoinder was—"Damme, it shall never be said where *I've* the command, the Union-Jack of old England was trampled under foot." This served him as summer logic, but with the approach of winter the enthusiast found his ground no longer tenable, and was obliged to enter into a compromise, not without a passing regret as to the honour of the flag, by laying it up in ordinary for four months in the year.

As things stood now, "a preventer-brace" of brass surrounded it, as if to warn the incautious stranger this was consecrated ground. The curtains were of mazarine blue, and, under the superintendence of Crank, were fitted by Tiller with regular "buntlines" and "leech-lines," like those attached to the courses of a ship. Indeed the fitting of these curtains not only drew forth from the veteran's sister many a remonstrance, but was a source of constant warfare between them; one wishing them made more congenial to modern taste, while the other would frequently accompany his determination on the subject with an earnest asseveration that, "as long as the breath was in his body, every curtain in the cottage should clew and brail up, man-o'-war fashion."

A handsome brass bracket projected from the wall on a scroll, the purpose of which, in its present state, it was not now easy to divine; but whenever an attack of gout assailed his master, Tiller was wont to affix thereto a tail block, or pulley, through the sheeves of which he reeved a regular topping-lift of silken cordage connected with the falling leaf of the patient's chair, so that he could either raise or lower the afflicted member at his pleasure; if we

may be pardoned for the profanation of using the term *pleasure* under circumstances of such exquisite pain.

Proof impressions of the most celebrated naval battles, by *Loutherbourg*, and exquisite sea views by *Vernet*, in costly frames, fantastically carved with conch-shells, tritons, and dolphins *en suite*, adorned the walls of both apartments. In the intervals between the panels, portraits of the favourite naval heroes of his time were most appropriately introduced. High above the rest, and in the post of honour, stood in massive gilding, a spirited representation in water-colours, by an able artist, under the anxious suggestion and critical correction of the captain himself (albeit, not a draughtsman), of the ever memorable victory of the twelfth of April, (1782) at the moment the Count *De Grasse* had struck to the gallant Rodney.

At the opposite end of the drawing-room, on a handsomely-mounted marble slab, taken from the grotto of Antiparos by his boat's crew, while he was employed in protecting our trade in the Levant, stood a complete model of a first-rate-man-of-war; on ordinary occasions, covered by a frame of plate-glass, edged with blue and gold. On festive occasions, when uncovered, a polite intimation in Tiller's best crow-quill hand was appended, advertising the unwary to beware in the following characteristic words:

*"Landsmen and Lubbers are requested not
to come within a Boat-hook's length of
the
BOYNE."*

The window blinds were, like the cottager's chest of drawers,

"Contrived a double debt to pay,"

and being covered on the inside with charts of the Channel, the West Indies, Levant, and Cattegat; either excluded, as Crank jocosely would say, "the light when too strong, or threw a light on the subject when lubbers were in the dark." Indeed, so deeply devoted to his profession was the veteran, that he could not dispense with an allusion to it in the minutest details of his household.—Every bell-pull was an anchor—on every door-knob grinned a Triton, or

other sea-monster ;—and in a handsome emblematic entablature over the curtain of the oriel window, where Britannia was represented as receiving the homage of the marine divinities ; by some characteristic perversity, old Neptune, instead of being in an appropriate posture of deference, occupied by far the most prominent place in the group ; and shook, rather too triumphantly, his trident over the head of the endeared emblem of our native land.

CHAPTER V.

“CURIOSITIES OF LITERATURE.”*

And there's a Novel !

* * * * *
Will rose in declamation :—“ 'Tis the bane,”
Says he, “ of youth—'tis perdition :
It fills a giddy female brain
With vice, romance, lust, terror, pain,—
With superstition.”

GEO. COLMAN.

A RAPID survey of the apartments and their embellishments, served to give our young friend a tolerable insight into the character of his host. However singular the mode which he had adopted to show his veneration for the service, the ardour which must have dictated it could not fail to entitle him to the esteem of a young officer devoted, as he had been, from boyhood to the profession of his choice.

The dinner party consisted of the veteran's sister already mentioned, Emily, a Miss Wilson, and a favourite intimate, or *ami de la maison*, who, though professionally engaged in the composition of drugs, had almost as marvellous a talent at the detection and decomposition of culinary effluvia, as the celebrated yet unhappy Accum himself ; or, in common parlance, could scent a good

* D'Israeli, Sen.

dinner during an afternoon's ride, as staunchly as ever fox-hound did the fresh traces of reynard. It was his custom on all occasions, when the scent lay well, to make a circuit as if in pressing haste, to a remoter patient, and carefully time his return so as to catch the family on the eve of dinner. In the present instance, however, he was an invited guest, and in all the dignity of both medical adviser and confidant of the family, took his seat, according to arrangement, by the lady of the house. In the selection of her friend, Emily had disdained the trite maxim of feminine politics, never to introduce a rival into the field, but in that much conned code, she had artfully enough preserved its spirit, and selected her fair companion for the day from among the less lovely daughters of Eve. A school intimacy between the girls had ripened into that description of friendship, if such a convenient *liaison* can be called, so usual in "each shade of many coloured life," compounded of gentle acquiescence on one part, and condescending patronage on the other. However dissimilar the aspect of the parties in such intimacies, the object and end are almost invariably the same, and may be said to be comprised in that expressive monosyllable *self*.

The soup had hardly been served, when the captain, casting an ominous glance at his sister, exclaimed—

"'Pon my word, sister, this savours strongly of the fore-hold.—Why, Thomas," said he, turning to his faithful dependant, "*you* know if the cook of the *Grampus* had sent up such soup to the cabin as this, he would have walked the weather netting for a whole dog-watch."—Then, addressing the lieutenant, he apologized by saying—"But, Sir, this is not one of our jubilee-days."

"I'm sure," said Mrs. Crank, interrupting the captain, "my brother may spare himself any further apology, when the gentleman must be aware we were rather *taken* by surprise.—But it all comes from the captain's preference for pea-soup, though he knows it takes such a long time in preparation."

To relieve his hostess from this assailant, Burton politely invited her to take wine.

"Aye, aye, Thomas, put the wine on the table," said

Crank—"decanted as I ordered?—Take Madeira, I believe, sister?" accompanying the interrogatory with a significant glance at Tiller, and two or three tugs at the cape of his coat.—"understand, Thomas!"

The signal was not only seen but understood by Tiller, who repeated it with the same precision as a frigate in the fleet, Tiller's right hand pulling his collar emphatically three times, and placing at the head and foot two decanters of wine, to say the least of them, obviously of two very different vintages. Burton, who was expert at all the art and mystery of exchanging signals at sea, amused himself in endeavouring to detect the secret cipher of this correspondence. Had it been three flags one above the other, differently coloured or diagonally cut, some probable inference might have been drawn as to the general subject of communication. But three tugs of the collar of a man's coat had about as much meaning to him on shore, as if he had seen three match-tubs traced up to the brig's mast head. That there was something in the wind, he was convinced; but as it was a private signal, and evidently not meant for him, he was content, for the present, to bridle his curiosity, hoping that some clue might yet be given to its development. But, for the information of the reader, it will here be proper to intimate that a practical piece of economy had lately been introduced at Camperdown Cottage, which consisted in the substitution of "*Cape*" for a better order of wine, whenever the veteran was observed to grasp the cape of his coat; for in bottling off their last pipe of port, it was agreed between both Tiller and his master, that "good wine was thrown away upon women."

For a few moments there was a pause, when Crank put a question to the lieutenant, which doubtless was suggested by the association of ideas on a subject uppermost in his mind.

"I suppose, Mr. Burton, you've changed your numerals very often since *my* day. What's number one now?"

Here Senna, seeing an opportunity for a little trite wag-gery, expressed his surprise at the question, observing, that ever since the creation, number *one* always meant one-self.

"Come," cried Crank, "it's not often you put in your

oar before the decks are cleared, doctor ; but there you 're at home, for no one can keep a sharper look out for that signal than yourself.—But seriously, I wish, Mr. Burton, you would sketch me a copy of the present code—though I suppose letting fly the top-gallant-sheets, like two blocks and a marling-spike, both stand for the same thing still ?”

Here Emily, imagining the conversation dipping too deeply into nauticals for the taste of her female friend, struck off at a tangent to a more familiar subject, and said :

“ I should think you gentlemen of the navy must have plenty of time for literary pursuits ?”

“ Oh, plenty, my dear,” said Crank—“ particularly when beating off a lee-shore with hatches batten'd down.—Eh, Mr. Burton—had her there, eh ?”

“ Why, Sir, these are things in which the ladies afford us little sympathy. There is no romance with them in any thing short of a shipwreck.”

“ Romances !” cried Crank, “ for heaven's sake don't talk of them—I hate them,” and then glancing at his sister, added—“ they 're worse than those tracts of yours. Their high-flying phrases turn young women's heads end-for-end, and make them as sentimental and squeamish as Barbadian creoles. Besides, I can't abide your shining suns and shady bowers.—D' ye think the reader cares a pin whether the sun rose in a blaze, or set in a bank ?* And after all their sickening stuff about darting beams and bursting billows, and such like shore-going trash, they invariably omit to mention the most material point !”

“ Pray what may that be, uncle ?” asked Emily, with excited curiosity.

“ *What ?—why the wind, to be sure !*”

“ Right, Sir, right,” exclaimed Burton, ready to choke with laughter.

“ To be sure, Sir,” said Crank, imagining the laugh was all on his side. “ Mark the wind—may make a pretty sure guess at the weather. Never want more, when Tiller calls me in the morning, than to tell me the quarter it 's in. Enough for me—regulates my rigging for the day.”

“ Yet, Sir, I should apprehend,” said Senna, drawing

* Fog-bank.

out his words in a pompously pedantic tone---“that the gout was often a---symptomatic of the weather as the wind. The a---body, I assure you, is no bad barometer. Though, to be sure there *are* winds which, by-the-by, philosophically speaking, from their pestiferous property, should rather come under the denomination of what we naturalists term blasts---but there *are* winds, or blasts, I should say, felt, if I mistake not, at Falkland’s Island, which a---”

“What the devil, doctor, do you know about the Falkland Islands?” interrupted Crank.

“Why, Sir, the philosophic mind, as the divine Cowper says,” glancing at Mrs. Crank, “‘sucks intelligence from every source.’ And if we may depend on the a---topography of the place, the---a---”

“The *what*?” cried Crank. “Why damn it, doctor, that’s something like double Dutch coiled against the sun.”

“A legitimate phrase, I fancy!” said Senna, appealing to Burton for assent. “Yes, Sir, if the topography of the Pacific be correct, the island is subject to periodical visits ---or I should rather say,” again eyeing Mrs. Crank, “visitations of Providence which considerably tend to increase the a---bills of mortality.”

“The bills of mortality!” said Emily. “I thought they extended not beyond the confines of London?”

“Possibly, *Miss*. But I assure you the blasts in question mow down the grass like a scythe---parch up the leaves of the trees---fish, flesh, and fowl, are alike subject to their fatal effects. The latter are seized with cramps, from which they never recover. Neither friction, nor a---antispasmodics are of any avail---swine are suffocated---adults drop down with a sort of throttling in the thorax, and children die with the croup, accompanied with acute catarrhal symptoms!”

“Gracious Heaven?” exclaimed Mrs. Crank, “so fearful a visitation from Providence must originate in divine vengeance at their heathenish wickedness. Are not all those islanders rank idolaters?”

Senna was too much a skeptic on some of the doctrinal points here embraced, to be caught in so formidable a conclusion. He had a polite waiver in all such cases, which

left every point at issue open, and to this he had recourse in the present instance.

"Possibly, Madam," said he, resuming his subject,— "and if we can place any reliance on the authority of Gregory---(Gregory, I mean, on the Economy of Nature ---the divine doctor, as designated by *us* lovers of truth," here laying a peculiar emphasis on the word '*us*,' accompanied by a glance at the lady, which would have been the making of any recruiting officer)---" "If we can take him as authority---there is some reason to suppose that electricity, and a chemical knowledge of the a---atmospheric fluid have in some degree improved our imperfect acquaintance with aerial currents."

"Currents!" cried Crank—"Why, d---n it, man, I was talking of winds—I suppose you'll next touch on the tides?—I tell you what it is, I don't want Doctors of either Physic or Divinity to teach me the effects of the wind or weather on either man or beast!"

"No, I assure you," said Emily, smiling, "my uncle is something like Hamlet—'When the wind's southerly, he knows a hawk from a handsaw.'"

"Where did you come by that precious phrase? That's more of your romance stuff," pettishly exclaimed the old gentleman.

"Well, brother," said Mrs. Crank, in a conciliatory tone,— "I must confess, though no friend to the general tendency of romances, they are certainly very often enlivened with instances of poetical description."

"Poetical description!" exclaimed Crank, "stuff—I hate your rhymers. We'd a fellow of that sort in the old *Ram*.* whose rhymes so turned his brain, that I'm shot, if he didn't plan a project to set fire to the ship, merely to have an opportunity of describing the effect of the flames on the water. What d'ye think of your poetry now?—Had her there, Sir, eh?"

"Nay," replied Senna, "that's arguing from an abuse of the art, to the art itself."

"What's that you say, Sir?" said Crank, sharply.

"He is contending," returned Burton, "that the insanity

* A familiar abbreviation of *Ramilles*.

of the poet, in this instance, is no argument against poetry itself. Though, to be sure, as Fielding says, '*Monsieur Romance* performs his surprising tricks of dexterity.'

"Well, but there's your great poet, Pope," said Crank, "who tells us 'whatever is, is right.' Now, was it right for poor Captain Towlins' agent to break with two thousand pounds of his client's money in his pocket? Was *that* right? I think that's a poser for your poetry! But to the question—we're yawing* from our course. Do they ever mention a word about the wind?"

"Wouldn't you think, uncle," said Emily, "a description of the bearing of the wind very silly in such a passage as that which I was reading this morning? I think it ran thus," added she, hemming to recollect herself, and she proceeded, assuming a softened tone—" 'It was a lovely summer's evening. The sun had sunk behind the western hills with more than usual splendour. A softened roseate tinct had diffused itself over the landscape, which was in effect but a faint reflection of the gorgeous glory of the vault above. In fact, it was one of those moments so favourable to thought and reflection, when it may be said nature itself stands still.' What would you think, now, of such a description being spoiled by the writer introducing his nautical knowledge to inform the excited reader that the wind was nor-west and by east, or whatever you may term it?"

"Avast there, my dear, with your nor-west and by east. You ought to have your ears boxed for not knowing better how to box your compass. But I think all that preamble might as well be saved, and say at once, it was a fine summer's evening, with a light air from the westward. It would have spared the reader a deuced deal of time, and, no doubt, the writer a vast deal of knitting of brows and bothering of brains. And as for nature standing *still*—I think I see the sun bringing up with his lower limb under the lee of a cloud for twenty-four hours, or the moon heaving to with *his* horns on *his* head, because some unfortunate frail one happened to be seized with a fit of *reflection* after dishonouring her husband and disgracing

* Digressing.

herself. No, no, none o' your romances for me—give me Roderick Random, Peregrine Pickle, or something of that sort of stamp—there you 've nature to a tee—Naked to the life. That Smollet was a d——d clever fellow—I'm told, too, he was little better than a loblolly-boy—but those pestle-and-mortar gentlemen are frequently long-headed folk—raise a mutiny in a ship as soon as a blister."

Whether this was intended by way of a side-shot or not at Senna, it would be injudicious to interrupt the narrative here to determine, but certain it was, many questionable looks were exchanged at table. Crank, however, unconscious, or affecting not to feel the force of his remark, continued thus addressing his niece:

"Come, *Miss Emily*, let's try you on another tack. 'Thomas, fetch me that book you 'll find face down on the drawing-room table, with the condemned mark on the back.'" Then, taking the volume from 'Tiller, he continued—"Aye, here we have 'em thick and dry—what d'ye all think of this?" said he, as he proceeded to read aloud a passage in a playful pompous tone—"Now *mind ye*, this is from a work professing to call itself a *Naval* novel—

"And breasting her broad-bow to the billows, she dauntlessly cut through the foaming fluid, as the huge ship *bore up* gallantly *against* the wind."

"Now, doesn't that sound very fine! Bump-a-bump-a-bump—and what is it after all! Why downright nonsense! Who ever heard of a ship *bearing up* in the *wind's* eye. But here we have it again—And while she *frowned full* upon her foe, she belched forth a flood of fire and smoke, accompanied by a *bellowing* roar, that mocked the surly moanings of the sleepy ocean." Now, mind the folly of this. Here's a fellow talking about a *foaming* fluid, when, almost in the same breath, he tells you the sea *was* asleep—wonder it wasn't snoring—! Well, now, what's the English for all this belching and bellowing? Why, that one ship hove up in the wind, as she crossed her adversary's *haws* on the opposite tack, and poured in a raking broadside, that *sent* her staggering astern. But another of these chaps, I recollect, tells us, when describing the destruction of two Turkish vessels by fire—that 'the burning ships were checked by a sudden

wind—they turned *half* round—seemed to reel and *shake*! then down they went with a *bubble* and a *kiss*!*

Now, had the fellow only left their sticks above water, he might have compared their foundering on fire to the fizzing of a red-hot poker thrust in a pot of porter. But, perhaps you think I exaggerate. Believe your own eyes," said the veteran, handing the lieutenant the volume, and flinging his spectacles on the table in a pet.

"Ah! these are sad prozers, Sir," said Burton.

"Prozers, Sir! I don't know what they are—for there's nothing in their noddles but trash. They put me in mind of a collier in a head-sea—kicking up a bobbery under the bows, and making a great foam and froth without advancing a fathom a-head in a watch."

"Well, but, uncle, you must allow that another of these novelists presents us with a glowing and spirited painting of a naval engagement?"

"Aye, aye, I remember the passage; pretty painting indeed!—I call it daubing. I wonder what the Lords of the Admiralty would think of an official despatch filled with long rigmaroles of the 'deep blue sea being dyed with blood,' and such romance like trash—wouldn't their lordships be justified in superseding the writer for insanity? How much better a letter of this sort would look in the gazette—Sir—I have to request you will be pleased to inform my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty—for you must know, I hate your hackneyed way of broaching the business by a prayer)—that at noon, this day, when standing on the starboard tack, latitude and longitude so-and-so,—wind, sow-west-and-by-west (mind the necessity of *that*), I discovered the enemy's fleet broad on the lee-beam—made the signal for battle—bore up in a line a-breast—broke the line—found, after four hour's action, yard-arm and yard-arm, fifteen as per margin, of the enemy's fleet had struck. Enclosed is a list of killed and wounded. I have the honour to be, &c. &c.' There you have it, short and sweet. That's my idea of the thing. Besides, don't you think that fifteen sail of the line, stand-

* Should there be any anachronisms by possibility here, the parties most interested doubtless will not fail to point them out—suffice it to say, it was not at *Navarino*.

ing into Portsmouth harbour, with the British flag flying over the French, says more on the subject than a volume as big as the Bible? Come, pass the wine, Mr. Burton."

Hitherto it might be said, in the captain's own phrase, it was all 'plain-sailing' with him; he had had it all his own way; but this allusion, or any of a similiar nature, was sure to awaken a discord in the family concert. Notwithstanding the eager volubility with which he was pursuing a favourite sentiment, he perceived his error, by the compressed lip and enlarging dimensions of his sister-in-law, as she drew up with all the marks of offended feeling at the unnecessary and, because unnecessary, profane allusion to sacred writ. In his present state of excitement, any interruption was not to be endured. Although rapidly hurrying to the climax, he resolved, somewhat at the expense of his consistency, to evade rather than contest the point; and the fair champion had hardly entered the lists, by saying she could not see any possible justification for so very improper and so unprofitable an allusion to that venerated volume, when he *eagerly* interrupted her—

"Well! well, sister: allow me just this once; and if you'll take but a turn with your tongue* for a few minutes, I'll not only agree with you in what you *have* said, but in what you *may* say for the next six months."—And then resuming his subject, he concluded his oration—"As for my part, I never look at a long-winded despatch without dreading to come to the conclusion; for they are mostly either a mere pretext for self praise, or a lame apology for losing a laurel."

Burton, who had alternately felt disposed to join in the triumph of his host, or to laugh at his dexterity in parrying his sister's interruptions, partly with a view to prevent a repetition of the latter, and partly through a desire to display an equal jealousy for the honour of the service, assured the captain, that though he had looked at the passage, he could see nothing in it but sheer ignorance; while in the passage of another author, which he had lately looked over, he had detected the most palpable, unmerited

* Hold-fast.

and malignant libel, on the character of our seamen, ever yet published.

Tiller, who had contented himself with taking only that respectful part in the 'entertainment,' sanctioned by the usages of 'polite domestics,' consisting of a subdued smile, or a significant shrug, now stood with his eyes distended, his mouth half open, and his body inclined towards the lieutenant, so as to form an angle of about twenty-three degrees out of the perpendicular, in an attitude of anxious attention. Burton took from his pocket his tablets, and proceeded to read, with very marked emphasis, the following extract—

" 'I have had considerable experience in the characters of English seaman, and I 'm far from believing them to be that open-hearted, generous, thoughtless race of men, they are imagined to be by those who are not intimately acquainted with them. On the contrary, I know them to be like all uncultivated beings, *knavish, selfish, and malevolent*; and I don't *hesitate to state*, that, on observing them off their guard, they will be found to be a *vicious and unprincipled* band.' "

A groan, which startled Senna and the ladies, escaped Tiller at the conclusion of this sentence, who endeavoured to conceal his error by burling about in his vocation; but such was his want of self-possession, that in placing a caraft of water by his mistress, he over-reached himself, and pressed on her shoulder, who resented this inadvertence by shrinking from him, and exclaiming sharply—"What's the matter—where's the fool lying?"—The poor delinquent, whose copper tinge now gave place to an honest blush of the deepest scarlet, exclaimed with warmth—

"I axes your pardon, Ma'am, but it's not me that's *lying*."

" 'Pon my word," said Emily, "Thomas is a wit."

"Rather say a wag," cried Senna, who would have entered into a long dissertation on the distinctive shades of difference between wit and waggery, had he not been interrupted by the old gentleman, who forgetting he was the first that introduced the book on the table, desired

* A similar passage to this appeared in a recent publication.

Emily to order it off, observing, that "books were very well in their way, but should not be crammed down people's throats with their meals."

Emily defended herself by saying, that the turn of the conversation, had led to their production. "Besides," said she, "they serve us, like Mr. Burder, with 'materials for thinking.'"

"Thinking, my dear!—what business have you to *think* at dinner? No, no, hang thinking—it spoils digestion. See what it has done for your mother!—But—come gentlemen, put some wine in your glasses, and I'll give you a toast, which I'm sure we'll all drink with pleasure."

The request being complied with, Crank raised his brimming glass, and, to the surprise of Burton, who had also filled a bumper, gave a toast which he had by no means anticipated—"Come, I'll give you," said the veteran, "the health of the ladies who are about to leave us."

Burton almost hesitated for a moment whether he should comply with the *will* of his host, clogged as it was by a codicil which cancelled the compliment. He was, however, too much of a disciplinarian not to comply with the order, yet could not refrain, while putting the wine to his lips, from looking an apology to Emily, and dropping so much of the toast as referred to the prospect of losing her society.

"Well!" said Emily, smiling—"it's no wonder gentlemen of the navy are complimented for their gallantry!"

The sarcasm was felt and attempted to be parried by the lieutenant, as he rose to open the door through which Mrs. Crank and the young ladies retired. But he was recalled to his station by the captain, who, in a tone loud enough to be heard by the fugitives, exclaimed—"Come, now, let's make ourselves comfortable for a while, and have a regular set-to at nauticals.—It will be quite a treat I assure you, Mr. Burton."

As the conversation assumed a totally different tone the moment the door closed on the ladies, out of compliment to them we shall close this chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

DOCTORS DIFFER.

"These are studies, wherein our noble and gentle youth ought to bestow their time in a disciplinary way."

MILTON.

"Dispute it like a man.

—— I shall do so :

But I must also feel it like a man."

MACBETH.

"WELL, now tell me candidly," said Crank, as soon as Burton had resumed his seat, "what brought you into such an out-o'-the-way port as this?—you scarcely ever see a man-o'-war bring up in the *Range*."

"Why, Sir, the fact is, our captain is a considerate, sensible man ; and though the phrase may be rather unpopular in the service,—a sailor's friend. Our cruize has been none of the shortest—we've had a deal of bad, and particularly wet weather, for the time of year, and some little rest is really essential to the ship's company's health."

"Then," cried Crank, "I wasn't very far out of my reck'ning this morning, after all :—you know, I told you, I thought you came in for a skulk—had you there, eh?"

"Pardon me, Sir," said Burton, assuming a serious tone, "Captain Staunch is actuated by very different motives, I assure you. He is acknowledged to be one of the most active cruisers in the channel, and as such, seldom puts into port—but when he returns from sea, after a long and harassing cruize, he is more desirous his crew should find harbour a place of rest, than a place of annoyance."

"Place of *rest*, indeed ! I wonder what the Port-Admiral, at Plymouth, would say to such lawyer-like logic ! —No, no—young man ;—want to make prize-money—you must banish rest from your thoughts. Agree with me, eh, Doctor ?"

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"Why, Sir," said Senna, "it's an axiom with *us*, that occasional depletion, is not more requisite to the body than repose :—and might I presume to prescribe, I mean, (said the doctor, recovering from his *lapsus*,) "to offer, an opinion upon the pint, I should certainly say, that well-timed relaxation—or rather, recreation—for *relaxation* frequently tends to enervate the system.—I should say, well-timed—a—a—recreation, for every thing depends upon timing things well—well-timed recreation might be safely administered—or rather resorted to by way of *sedative* to seamen after a protracted lab—I mean," said he, again correcting himself—"a tedious and fatiguing service."

The absurd pomp with which Senna usually dogmatized, was but little calculated to excite respect for the orator, however fluent the professional diatribe. Burton began to discover that most of Senna's science, or more properly speaking, mystery, consisted in the reiteration of technical terms; and an unsuitable application of professional phrase to ordinary topics.—In a word, though he stood on no mean footing in his own estimation, the doctor was but the fag-end of the faculty.

After Senna had finished his oration, Crank exchanging glances with Burton, then staring the apothecary full in the face, exclaimed—" 'Pon my word, Senna, I think you 'd make a capital first Lord of the Admiralty.—Had him there, eh, Mr. Burton?"

"I wish we *had* him there," said Burton, waggishly—"for if Lavater may be depended on, the lineaments of reciprocal patronage are so strongly characterized in the doctor's countenance, that I 'm sure the merits of his hospitable host would not long remain unrewarded."

"Bravo! bravo!" cried Crank.—"Why, Sir, you 're brisk as a bottle of ale in the dog-days. See, doctor, see what time does! D—n it, Sir, in my days, a lieutenant, unless it was to clap something into his mouth, never attempted to open it, at any other table than his own. But I say," continued the veteran, addressing himself immediately to Burton, "I say, let me give you a little friendly advice—don't let any of the Bigwigs ever hear you even *hint*, that *rest* is essential to seamen. Work 'em, Sir—

work 'em!—that's the way to have 'em in health—keeps the scurvy out o' their bones. Don't give them time to *think*, and they won't trouble you with *talk*. Indulgence indeed!—Mischief you mean!—for the one's sure to follow the other. No, no, Sir! work 'em—work 'em, that's my maxim!”

The emphatic manner in which Crank expressed himself on the subject of the treatment of seamen, had more the effect of putting Burton on his metel, than damping his ardour for debate. “I am sorry, Sir,” said he, “with due deference to your practical experience, that in this instance, I cannot entirely assent to your maxim. Why, let me ask you, Sir, should those, who enjoy all the luxuries of the land, and who, during the most tempestuous weather, are lounging on pillows of down, refuse to a ship's company, which, in all probability has been fagging hard to fill the coffers of their superiors, *some* little recreation on returning into port?”

“That's all very fine talk, about lounging on pillows of down—but pray how are you to refit your ships, if your system of recreation be adopted?”

“Refit, Sir?—With much greater ease, than has ever hitherto been effected in the service, if a proper, and well-matured system, were but once established. For instance, the moment a ship arrives in port, let her ‘*wants*’ be telegraphed to the Admiral's office, specifying the particular periods when she could probably be in readiness to receive each description of her stores and supplies:—for in the attempt to execute business of this sort with despatch, whether it be the fitting out of a frigate or a fleet, as much depends upon *method*, as on time and tide.”

“Very good, Sir,” said Crank, “though I hate your *Methodists* as I do the devil; I like, in my heart, a methodical man. Pity that shot didn't rake my sister!—Had she been here, I'd a' had her *there*, eh?—But go on with your system.—Hate all interruption—that's my maxim.”

With difficulty Burton could refrain from laughing aloud at the singularity of the veteran's affecting to adopt a precept, which he now plainly perceived to be so little in accordance with his practice.

“Well, Sir,” said the lieutenant, resuming the subject;

“as soon as a ship had made known her ‘wants,’ her stores (so as to suit the *time* and *tide* previously specified) should be shipped into lighters by the labourers of the yard, or the convicts of the hulks : for I maintain, that sea-going ships should be totally exempt from ‘dock-yard duty.’ Were this the case, with vessels so circumstanced, their return into port would be hailed with pleasure by the crews ; while, according to the existing system, harbour-duty becomes, positively, more harassing and annoying to seamen, when in such ports, than even their arduous duties when cruising at sea. Your own experience, Sir, must have afforded you opportunities of witnessing, when employed in fitting out at Spithead, or Cawsand Bay, the disheartening scene of a launch* full of men, pulling against a lee-tide† for hours together on a stretch ; and at length compelled, to give up the ‘tug,’ and return wet, cold, and comfortless to their ship, without having performed the service for which, as it is technically termed, they were specially ‘despatched.’ All this waste of toil and time may be fairly attributable, in the first instance, to want of precaution and forethought in choosing the time judiciously for sending the boats on shore. But this cannot always be attended to—for dock-yard duty must be done in dock-yard hours ;—and the party must leave the ship betimes, whether the tide is contrary or otherwise.—This is too often labour lost ; and instead of its being any economy of time or expense, (which would appear to be the object in view) the party ‘despatched’ might have been profitably occupied on board ; and the duty effectually performed by the convicts on shore. Indeed, in all cases, the convicts appear to be the persons best adapted for doing shore duty : both because they are at hand on the spot, and that it is desirable the crews of ships just returned from hard service, should not be subjected unnecessarily to the unavoidable drudgery of this particular duty. But no, Sir, it would appear—at least, if we may judge from the careful anxiety evinced by these (as they may be termed) *custodes morum*—”

* The long-boat of a ship of war.

† When the wind and tide are adverse to the progress of the boat or vessel.

"What ship's that?" interrupted Crank.

"I would say, Sir," continued Burton, with a smile, "that it would appear, the overseers of these disciples of Turpin, Barrington, and company, were more solicitous to promote the health and longevity of this respectable community, than higher authorities were to add to the popularity of the service, or to study the comforts of our seamen."*

"Why how do you mean, Sir?" asked Crank, assuming a quarter-deck air.

"I mean, Sir," said Burton, in an easy and unaffected tone, which was strongly contrasted with that of his host, "that should a slight shower of rain even *threaten* to fall upon the hallowed heads of these *colonial* candidates, they are instantly called in under shelter; while poor *Jack*, ashore or afloat, is condemned to work in all weathers."

"Work in all weathers! to be sure, Sir," said Crank.—"See here, Mr. Senna," for Crank liked not a long argument better than a good auditor—"See here, Sir—blow high, blow low, I'd always find something for seamen to do. D——n it, Sir, I'd make them polish a two and-thirty pound-shot; aye, and *blacken* it *again*, after it was *brightened*, rather than let them be growling, or idling about the decks with their hands in their beekets."

Senna, who possessed the peculiar tact of being able to accommodate his principles to all parties in dispute, while preserving the appearance of according with the last speaker, had now recourse to his favourite phrase "*just so*," which was invariably uttered in a tone of approbation.

"To be sure, Sir!" said Crank, thinking he had the best of the argument; "If you want to rule the seas, you must rule the sailor with a rod of iron. Work-up *Jack*, as you would old *junk*: and the devil's in 't; if you don't draw the '*rogue's yarn*'* in the end."

"I am sure Mr. Senna will agree with me," said Bur-

* It gives no great satisfaction to be enabled to admit, that since the late auspicious change in our naval administration, a highly laudable anxiety has been displayed to increase the comforts of our seamen.

† Rogues yarn—the white thread in all king's cordage to detect theft.

ton, intending a slight sarcasm at both Crank and the cautious and complaisant apothecary, "that at all times it is better to acknowledge our ignorance than betray it—for I confess, I have yet to learn the principle of justice, upon which the captain would found *his* system of discipline."

"I suppose now," cried Crank, "you think that a regular-built pauler?"*

"No, Sir," returned Burton, in a tone of deference; "I only mean to assert, that upon *your* principle of discipline, you render inoperative, the salutary system of rewards and punishments. Why impose on any set of men, but particularly seamen, duties, which they themselves know to be useless; and which must consequently savour of tyranny and oppression? What think you, Mr. Senna?"

"*Just so*," replied the dealer in drugs, with a slight nod of approbation at Burton, which however escaped the eye of his host.

"I tell you what it is, young man," said the veteran, immediately addressing himself to Burton, and in a tone evidently intended to make a deep impression on the mind of the lieutenant—"wait till you grow *gray* in the service, and then you'll *know* better!"

"*Just so*," reiterated Senna, without, however, venturing to assign any reason for thus appearing to agree in opinion with two persons whose sentiments on the same subject were so totally opposite.

Anxious as Burton felt to join the ladies in the drawing-room, he was not altogether disposed to concede to his superior the point in dispute. "Whether, Sir," said he, "my professional conduct will ensure me the good fortune even to retain my *name* on the list, much more the *honour* of growing *gray* in the service, my present opinion is likely to remain unchanged on the expediency of allowing to seamen occasional recreational, as well as the impropriety of imposing on them unnecessary and annoying duties.

"How often does it happen that a ship, running in from stress of weather, has scarcely taken up her birth, before

* Pauler, or stopper—an unanswerable objection.

the signal is made her to '*take the guard,*' while the boats of the '*guard-ship*' (a misnomer by-the-by) are not unfrequently employed pulling ladies about the harbour on parties of pleasure:—to say nothing of the hurry-worry system unnecessarily practised of *pushing* returned ships out of port, scarcely giving time to the officers to get even their clothes washed?"

"*Clothes washed, indeed!*" interrupted the old gentleman, in a tone of astonishment. "Many 's the time, Sir, when on short allowance of both soap and water, I've thought it a capital catch, whenever I succeeded in coaxing the cook out of the pea-soup drainings o' the coppers, to wash my own shirts in *myself*.* What do you think of *that*, Mr. Senna?"

"I think," replied the apothecary, perceiving that an opportunity was here offered to display his slight smattering of chemistry and botany—"I think, Sir—the—a—vegetable matter contained in the a——"

"Damn the vegetable matter,—but what d'ye think of a fellow being obliged to turn his *own washerwoman*?"

Burton here burst out into a loud laugh—while Senna, after pausing some moments, as if evidently at a loss for an appropriate reply, at length ventured to say, that he "thought the captain better calculated to cut a figure in the larder than the laundry."

"Why, yes," retorted Crank, who never lost an opportunity (as he termed it) of '*hulling* the doctor,' "I must say, '*Mangling done here,*' wouldn't exactly suit my shop as well as yours—ha! ha!! ha!!!—Had him there, eh, Mr. Burton?—Come, pass the wine after that."

And here we may remark, that Crank's *double* was not altogether inappropriate—for the apothecary's predilection for phlebotomy was proverbial; the lancet was as frequently in his hand as were alkali and acids in his mouth. Luckily for the richer classes, his practice among them was limited; and the poor fared better at his hands, or rather at nature's; to whose fostering and restorative care, he in most cases of doubt (that is, as to remunera-

* This is no exaggeration—though perhaps a luxury unknown to the *peace-officers* of our service—*aliter*—officers who have entered the navy since the peace.

tion) abandoned them, as the most economic, and perhaps, he felt from experience, the less dangerous practice. He treated all distempers, as if originating in over-repletion; and radically went to work by emptying the pockets of the sufferer, as the surest way to strike at the root of all intemperance. Thus his prescriptions, like the nostrums of the advertizing portion of the faculty, were adjusted on the principle of a cobbler's last, and served indiscriminately for a variety of patients, very dissimilarly affected. Senna was so far from feeling any thing like compunction on the subject, that he used, on occasion, to assert, that "it was useless to stand upon trifles with patients, who had the constitutions of horses."

No sooner had Crank recovered from a sharp fit of coughing, occasioned by too long indulging in his laugh against Senna, than turning to the lieutenant, he exclaimed—"Come, Sir,—say your *say* out—you know, I hate to interrupt a man in the thread of his argument."

"I was about to observe," said Burton, "that though many of our *bona fide* grievances, had been redressed, in consequence of the regulations introduced into the service, subsequent to the mutiny at the Nore.; yet it is to be regretted there still exists in the service so many real annoyances. For instance, it not unfrequently happens, that some young, fantastic fop of a flag-lieutenant, who in all probability is more *au fait* at running a flirt, than spilling a sail, deprives a vessel of a small complement of men; or perhaps, the best part of her ablest hands, who might be employed in the execution of some indispensable duty on board, because——"

"Because," interrupted Crank, in a sneering tone, "he made the signal to knock-off work *too* soon, I suppose?"

"On the contrary," said Burton,—“such a thought never enters their heads——”

"Well, but how do they deprive a vessel of the use of her ablest hands?"

"Why, Sir, I have seen instances, where one of these beardless boys, has taken it into his head, in token of his brief authority, to make the signal for a lieutenant to appear at the Admiral's office, for the sole purpose of copy-

ing some such trifling 'port-order,' as—'that midshipmen may be permitted to wear round hats on duty; provided they mount the cockade and loop.' Now, Sir, instances of this sort have too frequently occurred, when it has been blowing so fresh, as to require a double-banked boat's-crew, to convey the officer on shore. And thus it is, I say, that a small vessel, like the *Spitfire*, is liable to have her ablest hands broken-off from an essential duty, because, forsooth, the flag-lieutenant has not the discrimination to perceive that this *important* intelligence might be communicated at any time, and certainly at a period less calculated to excite discontent—to say nothing of the tendency such ill-timed, and capricious interruptions may have in impeding the progress of a ship when fitting out in haste for some particular service——”

“Come, come—there 's something in *that*. I say, doctor,” said Crank, accompanying the remark with a shrewd nod of his head—“I say, it doesn't appear to me exactly, that Mister Burton wears his brains in his boots.”

“*Just so*,” said the sage disciple of Galen, who knew the full value of a phrase which meant any thing or nothing.

Here Tiller appeared, with an invitation to join the ladies at tea; a proposition cordially received by the lieutenant, while the old gentleman, looking at the doctor hesitatingly, inquired whether he might not call for another bottle of claret, before they returned to the ladies. The doctor, who had his cue on this subject, as well as many others, from the lady of the house, shrugged up his shoulders, and very pedantically, in Burton's mind, quoted from Juvenal, the line:

“*Pauper locupletem optare podagram—*”

to prove, that *poor* men only, pine for a paroxysm of gout. The veteran, conceding credit to the quotation, for containing unanswerable arguments against further vinous indulgence, accordingly arose with his friends, and repaired to the tea-table.

CHAPTER VII.

TRIFLES LIGHT AS AIR.

They gazed upon the sunset ; 'tis an hour
Dear unto all.

BYRON.

THE appearance of the gentlemen was greeted by the smiles of the ladies, who sat round a large window, opening on a green lawn, quietly enjoying an extensive land and sea prospect of singular beauty. The features of the coast were bold and peculiar ; the heights rich in vegetation ; the slopes of the opposite shore were now deeply enveloped in shade, as the sun rapidly approached his decline. In the bay beneath, lay the brig, gently oscillating to and fro, with the undulating swell of the sea, and scarcely enough wind to agitate her 'long and lazy pennant.' The shadows now stretching along the wooded heights, to the west, were in admirable contrast with the golden glory of the summer sky at sunset. The sea, too, in this direction, was one sheet of sparkling fire, except where the dark forms of the Homistone and Blackstone rocks, were chafed by the swell of the rising tide, and whitened for a moment in its foam. In the extreme distance the Start point caught the eye, dark at its base, and brightening at its summit, by the blaze of retiring day. Scenes like this are too beautiful, and too full of nature's own eloquence not to impose a deferential silence, and repose of spirit, on minds proof against every other appeal. Aided by the climate of this delicious region, the breathing balmy odours of that hour, she never fails to reassert her dominion over our dispositions, however indurated by attrition with the world : and speaking through the eye, awakens and reanimates every better feeling of the heart. It is not then to be wondered at, that during those few

moments of twilight, which may be denominated the last and loveliest of the glorious career of day, all eyes were attentively fixed on the fast-fading beauty of the scene, and that all sympathized in the feeling that it could be relished only in silence.

Tiller was too much a creature of habit and discipline to be infected by any such feelings.—The silence was broken by his abrupt entrance, and the hurried inquiry—

“Shall we make it sun-set, Sir? *She's* sometime dipped behind the hill ”

“Yes, Tiller, *make it so*,” said Crank, authoritatively; but again recollecting himself, he added, in an apologetic tone, evidently meant for Burton—“though—stop, Thomas—-we musn't top the officer over the brig, neither; our day's gone by for that—but keep your eye on her, and observe her motions.”

“Her *what*?” murmured the doctor to himself, whose ear was peculiarly sensitive to any thing which he thought savoured of professional allusion.—What might have followed, would, doubtless, have been embarrassing to some of the party, had not his misconception been corrected, by Burton exclaiming—

“You must be quick, Mister Tiller, or you 'll scarcely keep time with her motions; for I perceive the topmen are already gone aloft to send down the royal, and t o-gallant yards.”

“No matter,” said Crank, “for should you be late, Thomas, the port would sooner trust to our *time* than their's.”

“Well then!—there's sway away,” said Burton.

“Down they come,” cried Crank.

“Bless me!—what's fallen?” exclaimed Miss Wilson, in considerable alarm.

“Only the brig's broom-sticks, my dear,” said the veteran, pointing to the vessel below.

But just recovered from one alarm, the young lady was destined to have her nerves more seriously tried, for, in the next moment, a loud report close at her ear, as of thunder, excited the most unaffected terror in the poor girl: she jumped on her feet off her chair, and

caught fast hold of old Crank, exclaiming—"Good heavens! how near the thunder is, Sir."

Here all joined in a good-humoured laugh at her simplicity. Crank, however he might have thought some thirty years previously, felt his situation extremely embarrassing, and extricating himself from her embrace, acquainted her that the noise which so much alarmed her was nothing but Tiller "*making* it sunset."

The doctor had selected the seat next to Mrs. Crank; Burton that in the immediate vicinity of her daughter; and the old gentleman, taking a chair next Miss Wilson, jocosely remarked, that "it seemed to be the order of battle that every man should take his bird, and he could not see why he and Miss *W.* shouldn't grapple together for a spell."

The time occupied in general conversation was not lost to the lieutenant, who seemed to be gaining ground in Emily's good graces. He had resolved, in his own mind, to try her, as sailors term it, "on either tack;" and in their confabulation on a variety of subjects, both now, and at dinner, he found that, notwithstanding she could boast a more than an ordinary share of personal charms, her manners were highly attractive, and her mind bore evident marks of superior cultivation and improvement. While thus attempting to play the critic, Burton soon forgot a part which was by no means natural to one of his complexion, and began to feel seriously interested in the animated girl. Nor will this be a subject of surprise to any of our readers, if ever they have been debarred, for several weeks or months, of female society.

During this endeavour to draw her out, he failed not to develope sufficient of his own character to make her anxious to know more.—In this way, the conversation between them was prolonged, through a mutual motive of curiosity, until it appeared to have become sufficiently interesting to warrant the interposition of her mother, who begged she might be made a party in their coterie. Burton mentioned that he had been merely proposing, as an amusement, that the ladies should visit the *Spitfire*, as soon as the vessel had taken in her water.

Emily was not slow to take up the key-note, and expressed how much she should be gratified in availing herself of the present opportunity to visit a man-of-war. —Miss Wilson thought it would be quite charming; that is, if there were none of those shocking cannons to be let off; and stipulated, that, if she were to be of the party, they should return home long before the sailors commenced any preparations on board for making it sunset.' The doctor assured her a shock of that kind was rather salutary than otherwise. It tended to strengthen the nerves, and in some constitutions produced the same beneficial consequences as electricity. For his part, he should feel no alarm, if allowed to form one of the escort on board.

"Allowed!" said Mrs. Crank, rather querulously—"if it be determined by my brother that we shall visit, (though I shall put in my *veto* against it,) Mister Senna must certainly be one of the party—who knows what may occur? I am very timorous on water excursions—but leaving that out of the question, a medical man, upon every occasion, must be considered an acquisition."

"Why, yes," muttered Crank, "especially, if one's going to fight a duel!"

The hints dropped by the lady and her friend were too broad not to be understood. In the pause that followed, Burton perceived it would be indispensable to include the doctor. However loth, therefore, to increase the number of *idlers* on board, he, with a tolerably good grace, begged he would accompany the ladies.

Since the retreat from the dining-room, the captain had made several attempts to re-commence with Burton their former conversation on professional subjects. In this, however, he was foiled, for Burton's replies were all monosyllables; and Crank, more than most men, loved a spice of contradiction to render conversation palatable. He found that Emily's society had so many more attractions for this degenerate son of the ocean than his own, that he, although the host, had been altogether overlooked in the general invitation. This did

not escape Mrs. Crank, who, though affecting indifference to the proposed party of pleasure, exclaimed—

“Brother, if we *do* go, I hope you’ll accompany us.”

“I don’t know *that*—I got a hint not to go.”

“A hint not to go, uncle!” exclaimed Emily.

“Yes,—a very *broad* one too,” rejoined Crank; “I wasn’t *asked*—what d’ye think o’ that—had him there, eh!”

Burton, not without a blush for his inadvertence, and many apologies, pressed the veteran to be of the party, and begged permission to send one of the brig’s boats ashore for him and his friends.

“Well, well—you’ve other fish to fry, just now, Mr. Burton,” said the veteran, assuming as much importance as though he had been Port-Admiral—“When you’re all complete and a taunto, I’ll inspect you. But, in the mean time, we shall be glad to see you whenever ashore—always dine at four—Emily, my dear, an’t there a jubilee-day soon?—Aye, to be sure, the 12th, the Prince’s birth-day!—If he’s better, your captain must make one at the cottage.”

With these, and similar testimonials of kindly feeling, the old man dismissed his guest, who betook himself to the beach, where the boat, according to appointment, awaited him.

It would not be easy to define the sensations with which Burton looked up, from time to time, to the light on the cliff, now growing fainter and fainter as the boat cut her whitening way through the reluctant waves, impelled towards shore by the freshening breeze. The light, he perceived, had been removed to the oriel window, as if designed to assist him in reaching the ship; and he already formed a flattering conjecture as to whom he was indebted for this kind pilotage, from the circumstance of the light having been once eclipsed by the intervention of a female form; he, it may be conceived, looked for its re-appearance with more anxiety than he ever experienced in taking an observation of any of the planets for nautical purposes; and when the bright form again interposed, he was poetical enough to

compare its appearance to a transit of Venus. Had he been suffered much longer to continue in his agreeable reverie, he might have, perhaps, adopted some other capital error into his astronomical creed, and identified that emblem of beauty with the female, who then engrossed all his thoughts, instead of classing her among celestial bodies. Poetry and planet were, however, quickly chased by the dissonant challenge of the sentinel as they approached the brig.—

“Boat, aboye!”

“Holloa!” cried the coxswain.

“Coming here?” said the sentinel.

“Aye, aye,”—replied the steersman of the boat.

“Then it’s the lieutenant,” exclaimed a dapper little midgy, in a clear counter-tenor voice, as he looked out through one of the ports. “Bear a hand, you side-boys, with the lights—d’ye hear?”

These orders were complied with. The gig was soon alongside, and the boat hoisted up by the watch in a “twinkling.”

While the lieutenant repairs to report himself to the captain as “having come on board,” it may be proper to acquaint the reader that the fair object of his solicitude, having cautioned Tiller not to remove the light from the window for a few minutes longer, had consigned her beautiful person to be disencumbered of its attire by the faithful Abigail, who, in such situations, often found her orthodoxy fail, and was fain, like the lieutenant, to confound her young mistress with celestial beings. Having, with a complaisant glance or two at herself, adjusted the looking-glass, then the toilette, and lastly, the dressing-case, with its multifarious adjuncts and accessories to female comfort and luxury, Abigail bade Emily good night, and left her to enjoy repose as happy and profound as that ascribed to the youth Lucius by the poet.

“Enjoy the honey heavy dew of slumber:
Thou hast no figures, no fantasies
Which busy care draws in the brains of men;
Therefore thou sleep’st so sound.”

CHAPTER VIII.

SHIFTING A BIRTH.

How names, mistaken for things, mislead the understanding!

LOCKE.

Uptorn, reluctant, from the oozy cave,
The ponderous anchor rises o'er the wave ;
Along the slippery masts the yards ascend,
And high in air the canvass wings extend.

FALCONER.

NOTWITHSTANDING all the rules laid down, from time to time, by Aristotle, and other critical writers on rules of composition, to prove the necessity of preserving the unities in narration ; we are in some degree absolved from the difficulties under which the dramatist labours. Singular as it may appear, no precedent can be adduced to restrain the nautical writer from postponing the consideration of the unities of time and place, to the more important consideration of preserving the unities of time and *tide*, which the stern maxim emphatically informs us, "wait for no man." Critics may cavil in vain as to our right to exercise this discretion, and bring a broadside from Longinus to bear on our "beam"—we shall receive it with cheers ; but without altering our course. Nature, not rules of art, must be our compass ; common sense our pilot. Our narrative is nautical, and must, therefore, be natural. Time, tide, and tars, we must take as they are ; nor would it, perhaps, add interest to the details of the life of a sailor, that the two former were less variable, less irresistible in their influence, or the tar himself less the sport of that overruling influence. Of our new-born privileges as novel writers, not writers of *novels*, we confess ourselves tenacious. To ordinary criticism, we owe no deference : our theme is above it. They and ourselves possess hardly one principle in common with each other. Yet are these and the sketches we have heretofore

represented, pictures of real life ; whose resemblance, however liberally they may have been acknowledged by the reading public, can be examined critically only by professional men. Let professed criticism exult in the arbitrary control it has obtained over the world of words ; which, with the aid of art, it may be said to have created. Our world is the trackless, illimitable ocean : and we disdain appeal to all other judges, than denizens of the world of waters.

But we have been somehow inadvertently borne out so far into the sea of criticism, that we had nearly forgotten the title of this chapter, or that to "shift a birth" conveniently, it becomes important to consult the tide.

Had the inclination of Burton been consulted, Camperdown Cottage, which now engrossed all his thoughts, would have been visited on the following morning much earlier, than perhaps either propriety or the rules of fashionable etiquette would have sanctioned. But this inclination was in some measure checked by a considerate feeling on his part, in wishing not to appear to encroach on his captain's indulgence, nor to deprive his brother officers from the pleasures of the shore by any monopoly of leave. Independently, however, of these considerations, there were now duties to be performed on board, requiring his presence in his station.

The small quantity of fresh water procured on the previous afternoon had determined the captain to remove the *Spitfire* further in shore ; and though still labouring under lameness, he was too anxious and active an officer not to superintend the movement in person.

The circumstance of the tide not serving to admit of the brig "breaking ground" before the usual hour of breakfast on board, afforded Crank another opportunity to indulge his vein in criticising some of the preparations already made afloat for this evolution.

The light airs which, for the greater part of the morning, had been flying about in flaws, scarcely rippling the surface of the sea ; and sometimes only discernible by the varying shade, here and there, which traversed the smooth bosom of the bay, or altered the bright green of the water to a deeper tint ; now acquired more steadiness and

strength in their descent from the towering heights, until, from their congregated force, a moderate breeze, a length sprung up from the land, and down the channel through which the *Spitfire* had to wind her way to fresh spring ground.

As yet, all was tranquillity on board. The midshipmen of the watch, and sentinels, were the only persons to be seen on deck, with the exception of Burton, who was mounted on one of the after carronades, in order to rest his glass on the hammock rails, as he indulged his anxious curiosity, and probed every window of the cottage. One indication, however, though the only one, of a movement on board, had not escaped the experienced eye of the veteran, who, having finished his breakfast, took up his station at his favourite telescope, maintaining as "bright a lookout" on the brig (though actuated from different motives) as Burton kept upon the cottage.

"Come, bear-a-hand, Thomas—clear away the decks," cried Crank, hurrying Tiller to remove the breakfast things from the table—"Be brisk, I see the brig's got her *cat* down ready for a brush."

"Her *what*, brother?" sharply interrogated Mrs. Crank, whose apprehensions for the safety of some of the feline species, by long prescription favourites with the fair, were excited by her brother-in-law's intelligence.

Emily had also caught the contagion, and looked anxiously to the hearth-rug, where, contrary to drawing-room etiquette, and the commodore's interdiction, a favourite tortoise-shell kitten lay on her back, flourishing her tail about, while sporting with a stray ball of cotton, purloined from the work table—"Poor Tab," she exclaimed, "your velvet coat wants no brush. How can they be so cruel?" she continued, approaching her uncle, as if to ascertain what was going on aboard.

"Why, you brace of simpletons," said he, without taking his eye from his glass, "do you think there's no cat on board but Grimalkin?—Come, Thomas—the bars are shipped, I see. Now for it—there's turn the hands up—here's the boatswain?—aye, there's *lay* in—you'll have a *treat* directly."

"A *treat*, brother, do you call it?" exclaimed Mrs.

Crank, in a tone indicating that fresh fear had been awakened by the last observation.

"What do you mean, uncle?" asked Emily, with excited curiosity.

"What do I mean, child? Why, that you'll presently have your ears pierced with a little man-o'-war's music—that's all—the chaps in the chains *singing* out like rogues."

"Oh! dear, uncle," exclaimed Emily, in a tone of sympathy which would have been highly gratifying to the ears of all on board, had they witnessed the interest she betrayed—"surely they are not going to inflict corporal punishment on the poor dear sailors?"

"Why, what now?—Have you been reading more of your romances?—'Gad, I think they've turned your head in earnest."

"It is something more than *romance*, brother, however habit in you may have unfortunately got the better of your feelings for your fellow creatures," interposed Mrs. Crank.—"You but this instant said that the *cat* was in readiness for a *brush*, and every school-boy knows the interpretation of *that* phrase."

"Well, so it is ready,—and the *fish* too;—what d'ye think o' that now—eh?"

"Think, brother!" replied the matron, "I don't know *what* to think; though I must confess, that such associations as *cats*, *bars*, boatswains, and unfortunate creatures, crying out in *chains*, naturally lead one to infer they are inflicting on board some cruel and oppressive punishment!"

"Handsomely!—handsomely, old girl—take a turn there—a soverer turn* too;" said Crank. "D——n it, is it because you choose to be stupid enough not to understand plain-sailing English, that you must take it into your head they are committing murder afloat? But, it's a true saying, 'there's no teaching old dogs to dance;' nor," continued he, anticipating his jest with a chuckle, which would have been very properly reprehended by certain wiseacres in St. Stephen's—"nor are you the *first* old woman in Parliament who has raised a false alarm and a hubbub

* Nautical for a secure turn.

about a thing that never can, I tell you again, be dispensed with."

"Upon my word, uncle," said Emily, "I confess, that though you don't exactly deal in parable, your language is, at least, very equivocal. Now, do afford us some explanation—what *are* they about?"

"What?—Why, about to shift their *bob*, to be sure," replied Crank, with a self-satisfied simplicity, which was the result of his conviction, that this curt explanation was perfectly explicit. "I just want to see, my dear, how long they 'll be weighing—therefore take my watch,—I 'll look out, and give you the word: for it 's fair, you know, to count time the moment they begin to heave round the capstan. I know, in the old *Grampus*, I didn't allow more than an hour and a half to heave in a whole cable,—*cat* and *fish* the anchor, and have her under every thing,* low-and-aloft, close-hauled, in a moderate breeze."

As to the nautical information likely to be derived by his female auditors, from this stubborn reiteration of the terms 'cat, and fish,' without any attempt at explanation; the veteran might as well have amused them by an allusion to the old pot-house sign of the "Cat-and-the-fiddle;" the solution of whose mysterious, though humorous connection, seems, to some antiquarians, to lie deeper beneath the rubbish of ages, than any antediluvian relic yet discovered by Professor Buckland, in the geological strata. The ladies, however, had some reason to suspect, from the knowledge of Crank's general character, that he could not derive pleasure from a fellow-creature's anguish: and that their alarm might be groundless. And as he was garrulously disposed, he soon gave Emily reason to believe, she was more likely to be gratified by the nearer neighbourhood of an individual in whom she already began to feel considerably interested, than to have her feelings shocked by any unseemly parade of punishment.

As Crank had anticipated, the crew of the brig had already been summoned to their stations, by the boatswain's shrill pipe and short cry of "hands, up anchor."

The mandate was neither delivered, as is too often the

* All sail set.

case, in that lengthened, drawling tone, only calculated, like a Quaker's sermon, to lull all energy; nor needlessly repeated by the piercing pipings* and hoarse bawlings of his mates: Staunch being too much of a disciplinarian not to have seen the necessity of abolishing this *Benbow-ical* and privateer-like practice, before he had been a week on board; or to permit any unnecessary noise in a ship of war placed under his command.

The general though momentary bustle on board which succeeded the boatswain's short summons or *solo*, subsided in a very few seconds. The "capstan was manned" in a moment by above fifty of the crew. The active but orderly mass included in this powerful piece of machinery, remained mute and motionless as they leaned their broad breasts at the bars, every eye anxiously awaiting the waive of the hand that was to set all in motion: for in signifying his commands, Staunch, like other monarchs,† preferred adopting the "sign manual" to the more vulgar mode of verbal communication, and his crew equally understood his orders by waive of hand, or by word of mouth.

The silence which pervaded the brig (for not a syllable, low or aloft, was allowed to be uttered, save from the lips of a superior) was now broken by Burton, who stood in an elevated station on the fore-castle, which afforded a full view of his person to Crank's little circle at the cottage. *Brought to for'ard, Sir,*" said the lieutenant.

"Very well," answered the captain, who, in consequence of his lameness, had taken up a seated position on the upper steps of the ladder leading to the poop.

* It has been ascertained, since the Peace, that several French privateers, last war, when under cover of the darkness of the night, or the denseness of a fog, like banditti of old, have solely escaped capture by the timely intimation of a whistle. Indeed, we have ourselves, before now, witnessed as much wind expended on hoisting a cask upon a deck, or a stay-sail aloft, as would have served to 'fill' a first-rate's foresail, or have answered all the resuscitating purposes of the '*Humane Society*' for a whole winter!

† An anecdote is told of a captain in the service, since dead, that while carrying out a British ambassador to his station abroad, a quarrel arose on the subject of precedence. High words were exchanged between them on the quarter-deck, when, at length, the ambassador thinking to silence the captain exclaimed, "Recollect, Sir, I am the representative of His Majesty!" "Then, Sir," retorted the captain, "recollect that *here* I am more than majesty itself. Can the King seize a fellow up and give him three dozen?" Farther argument was useless—the Diplomatist struck.

"Now," continued he, addressing the people employed at the capstan, "now, recollect, my lads, I want no more than the "*double-quick*" step, for I always suspect there 's a good deal of "*heaving thro' all*," when there 's any *fast* running round; so now—

"Left foot—

"Double-quick—

"Heave."

The capstan was instantly set in motion, the seamen marking their quick-measured step to the mellifluous strains of a woolly-headed African cat-gut scraper, who, as occasion required, catered for the carnal appetites of the crew below in the galley as cook's-mate, or restrained their brute force like *Orpheus* of old, by measured modulation.

In consequence of the steady step preserved by the men at the capstan in their circumambulatory march, the *cabal* was not only hove in with great celerity, but with an equable motion that permitted the people below leisurely to bend and coil it away, without any of those interruptions or stoppages at the capstan, common on such occasions to most ships in the service. A few minutes served to bring the brig near enough to her anchor to render it necessary the circumstance should be announced by Burton, who exclaimed—

"*Hove short, Sir.*"

At a single waive of the captain's hand, the capstan ceased to move, and was quickly pauled or secured at its base, while the bars were immediately "*unshipped*" and laid aside upon the deck, previously to the operation of loosing sails, and tripping or starting the anchor from its slimy bed. These preparations occupied scarcely half a minute's time, when the captain gave the word—

"*Loose sails.*"

Preparatory to performing this evolution, about forty sailors destined for this service, whose white Guernsey-frocks and trowsers were strikingly contrasted with the black hull, masts, and rigging of the brig, quickly collected in the lower part of the fore and main shrouds; all eager to obtain the start of each other. The younger men and boys, who were destined to reach the giddy heights of the royal and top-gallant yards, with eyes archly fixed on the

captain as he sat on the ladder, cautiously raised a leg a ratline higher in the shrouds, to make sure of even this trifling advantage over those who had a much shorter course to run—an artifice which was often checked by the two lieutenants exclaiming, in a subdued tone—

“Keep down, men!—down no stealing!”

At the word—

“*Way aloft!*”

a scene of anxious and emulous alacrity ensued in the rapid flight of the men up the rigging, which, to the unpractised eye of Emily, merged into the most orderly and compact position of the tars, as they remained momentarily grouped about the bunts and quarters of the lower and loftier yards. The order to

“*Trace up—lie out,*”

followed, which, accompanied by two short *chirps* of the boatswain's whistle, again set in motion the active limbs of the ‘loosers.’ At the word ‘trace up,’ the studding-sail-booms, already disengaged from the iron clamps in which they were wont to rest, were now lifted by lines affixed to their inner ends. Thus suspended, they formed acute angles with their respective spars, and afforded to the emulous seamen a support for the hand, so as to render more secure their frail footing, as they scampered, like cats, along the yards. Every hand was now busy for an instant casting-off the gaskets or platted ties, which held fast the furled sails in their folds; while those who had been more expeditious in completing their task, supported the weighty canvass in their arms as they balanced their bent bodies on the yards, anxiously awaiting the word to drop their heavily-drooping burden to the breeze.

Burton, who was always ambitious that the seamen, under his immediate inspection, should be foremost in the performance of every evolution aloft, was now the first to exclaim—

“*All ready for’ard, Sir.*”

Soon after, an announcement followed from Hasty, who, by a waive of his hand, signified, that the ‘loosers’ abaft were equally prepared. After a momentary pause, and scrutinizing glance aloft, the captain vociferated—

“*Let fall—sheet home.*”

The sails fell simultaneously from the sailors' grasp, shivering in the wind, as their sheets* were brought home, or extended to the outer extremities of the yards. The 'loosers' were now seen flying in from the spars in every direction. Their descent had hardly been effected on deck, by running down the ratlines of the riggings, with a degree of velocity, almost superhuman—for, on board this ship they were not permitted to slide down the back-stays, or display any unnecessary agility at the expense of their clothing,—when Staunch 'sung out'—

"*Man the topsail haliards.*"†

Led through leading blocks on both sides of the deck, the haliards were immediately grappled by the many-handed mass, who had so disposed themselves as to ensure a free and uninterrupted run fore-and-aft; while a few of the more trusty hands and petty officers were busied in attending the braces, overhauling the clue-lines, and other hanging gear, to facilitate the rapid flight of the ponderous yards aloft. Without awaiting the lieutenant's 'customary report of—"*all manned with the topsail haliards*" (a useless intimation, by-the-by, in a flush-decked vessel, where the eye of the officer, carrying on the duty, meets with no obstruction)—the commander exclaimed—

"*Hoist away the topsails.*"

The topsails flew to the topmast's head, tauntly extending their wide wings to the breeze, while every plank of the brig below experienced a tremulous vibratory motion, occasioned by the fast fleeting feet of the tars, as they ran, haliards in hand, round the deck. The operation of 'sheeting home,' and hoisting the heavier topsails, had hardly been effected, ere the taunt 'top-gallant-sails,' and the still lighter and loftier 'royals,' appeared spread on their respective spars: the combined effect of the whole, presenting to the astonished eye of Emily a sudden and imposing metamorphosis. Indeed the old gentleman

* It may be here necessary to observe, that the *sheets*, which are universally mistaken by "English Bards" and even *Scotch Reviewers*, and their readers, for the *sails* themselves, are no other than the ropes employed to extend the claws, or lower corners, of the sails to which they are attached.

† Tackles, by which the topsails are to be hoisted or lowered, when the sails are to be extended or reduced.

himself seemed to participate in his niece's surprise, and more than once he was observed to rub his eyes as if he suspected himself under the influence of some optical illusion.

"Which way shall we cast, Mr. Stowel?" said the captain, addressing the master, who had just returned from the fore-castle.

"To port, Sir—"

"*Man the starboard head-braces and larboard after,*" cried the commander, in an audible tone—

"*Overhaul the lee-lower-lifts and trusses—Brace up.*"

The head yards were now backed against the breeze, while those on the main-mast were obliquely braced in the opposite direction.*

To this evolution succeeded the operation of again 'shipping and swiftening in the bars' of the capstan,—a repetition of trouble to which all frigates and flush-decked vessels are unavoidably subject, and over which, in the evolution of 'weighing,' ships of the line have a considerable advantage.

The capstan being manned in a moment, the word was given to 'heave round,' when the 'double-quick time' of the tars soon brought the brig over her anchor—and this was followed by the announcement from Burton—

"*Up and-down.*"

"*Thick-and-dry for weighing.*" cried Stauch.

A turn at the capstan, with a hearty and heavy heave of a well-concentrated power, soon tore the anchor from its bed.

"*Heave-and-weigh,*" cried Burton.

"*Man the jib haliards,*" said Stauch. The men were already in their stations when the order succeeded—

"*Hoist away.*"

Flapping in the wind, and following the diagonal line of rope on which it travels in its ascent aloft, the jib flew to the foretopmast-head; while a few hands on the fore-

* This evolution is practised with a view to impel the ship's head in the desired direction, as soon as the anchor breaks loose from the ground.

castle quickly 'gathered aft' its shaking sheet, and the canvass, ceasing to flutter, boldly bellied to the breeze.

The practice common in the service of announcing to the men labouring at the capstan when the anchor breaks upon the eye, or looms through the dazzling deep, as it slowly rises to the surface, had always been deemed unnecessary by Staunch, and the old form of exclamations—*Heave-and-in-sight*," and, "*Heave-and-a-wash*,"—were in the *Spitfire* invariably dispensed with—a departure from old precedent, which, perhaps, will be the less regretted by all disciplinarians, as they must have often observed these technical intimations were resorted to by boisterous boatswains, as often to exercise their lungs as to cheer the people at the capstan.

Looking down on the water, as he stood on the bowsprit, with his breast leaning over the man-rope, Burton had now, by a telegraphic movement of his left hand, mutely announced the anchor at the bows. The operation of again paulling the capstan and unshipping the bars, was now quickly repeated—

"*All hooked with the cat*,"

cried Burton, with seeming exultation, which, however suited to the occasion, would doubtless have impressed (had he been present) a certain ex-senator, whose attention had been so humanely directed to the protection of quadrupeds, with a very unfavourable opinion of the lieutenant's humanity.

The *cat* had already been seized by the crew,—the fall taughtened—the 'messenger' surged—the cable 'stuck out' and stoppered, when, as if cheered by the feline allusion which followed, of—

"*Haul away the cat*,"

the tars ran the ring of the anchor up to the cat-head in a twinkling.

"*All hooked with the fish*,"

cried Burton,—an intimation altogether unconnected with the fate of the finny tribe—the fish here meant being a hook, employed to raise the anchor-fluke on the gunwale. At a waive of Staunch's hand, the seamen, who had already hold of the fish-fall, cheerily applied their united force to the rope, and, with a run aft, as fast as foot

could fall, they succeeded in bringing the ponderous anchor to its resting-place.

A pilot, in a punt, had now pulled along-side, and as neither the captain nor the master had acquired any acquaintance with the locality of the port, save that which the 'sailing directions' on the chart had afforded, the services of the pilot were readily accepted.

"We intend casting to port," said Staunch, addressing the pilot, who, as he came up the side, doffed his hat, and made his awkward obeisance to the King's quarter-deck—

"Ees, zure, Zur," answered the pilot, in a west-country accent—"better vurst maike aboard towards the Blackstone—should loike though, captain, if so be it's all the zame to thee, to keep the *lead* aloive."

"The leadsmen," said Staunch, "are already in the chains."

"Then, Zur, when you plaize," said the pilot, perching himself up on one of the after carronades, in order to have a full view of the 'leading marks' of the port.

The head yards had already been 'filled,' or braced round to the breeze. Meantime, the boom-mail sail had been hauled out abaft; while, on the bunts of the fore and main yards, hands were observed in readiness to overhaul the gear of the courses, employed for the purpose of confining, in festoons, the large lower sails, as yet suspended in the brails—

"*Man the fore and main-tacks,*," cried Staunch, in his usual tone of distinct articulation. The word, '*haul aboard,*' had hardly escaped his lips, ere the deep and heavy folds of the courses fell fluttering in the wind; while their tacks were brought on board, or drawn down to the deck, and their sheets 'roused aft' with the rapidity of thought.

The bowlines had been hauled—the weather-braces 'set taught,' and every 'cloth' in the brig now trimmed to the breeze, when, gracefully yielding to the pressure of her canvass, she darted through the water like a dolphin in pursuit of prey.

"Bless the craft!" said the pilot, looking over the side with astonishment—"why she walks like a witch."

"Walk!" said Hasty—"wait till you see how she

works.—Why, man! she shoots like a star of a frosty night."

"Silence!—not a word fore-and-aft," cried Staunch, in a tone which was intended to spare him the necessity of conveying, in more direct terms, a personal censure—for though Staunch 'off duty,' was always affable with his officers, yet '*on service*,' he was too critical a disciplinarian to patronize poetry or irruptions of fancy.

The ropes had been already coiled up, and 'led along,' with every man in his station for 'staying,'* when descending from the gun, under no little excitement, proceeding from the responsibility he felt, in having, for the first time, charge of one of his majesty's ships, the pilot hastily exclaimed—

"Round with her, Zur.—Be sharp, if you plaize."

Obedient to her helm, the vessel hove quickly in the wind, while her bulging bow, forcing apart the resisting fluid, flung wide around the foaming spray.

"*Helm 's-a-lee*,"

cried the commander. The 'head-sheets' were 'let fly' and heard flapping in the wind, when, as the brig rapidly rounded to the breeze, and the sails abaft as rapidly altered from a full to a fluttering condition, the word,

"*Raise tacks and sheets*,"

was given. In compliance with this order, preparatory to swinging and bracing round the head yards, the clues, or lower corners of the courses, were partially raised above the deck.

"*Haul well taut*,"

cried Staunch, giving the wanted precautionary word. The brig had now brought the wind nearly a-head, or rather a little on the weather bow. The captain, who was as well aware of the importance of securing 'a good swing' as any of our fashionable *amateurs*, who delight in witnessing the final expiatory evolutions of 'Old Bailey' performers on the tight rope, vociferated, as he observed the wind catching the weather leeches of the sails abaft—

"*Main-sail, haul*,"

The yards on the main-mast flew simultaneously round

* Tacking—putting the ship about.

with a violent swing, accompanied by an astounding crash, occasioned by the lee-clue of the main-sail coming in rapid collision with the rigging ;* whilst reversing their former position, the tacks and sheets were trimmed in a trice. The brig's head fell off from the wind in a different direction from that to which it had previously pointed on the opposite tack ; and the after sails again filling to the breeze, the captain exclaimed—

“ *Fore-tack—fore-bowlin—of all haul.* ”

The head yards were now braced round, and every thing trimmed fore-and-aft, when the brig, bending, like a willow, to the breeze, quickly gathered way, and again glided through the water with her former rapidity.

From the velocity with which the *Spitfire* was flying through the water, it may be easily conceived that, in working up a narrow channel, short tacks were the order of the day.

As the vessel neared the steep, on which stood Camperdown Cottage, the seamen's eyes were turned involuntarily to this spot, so eminently favoured by nature. The whole shore was now minutely developed. Every object, animate or inanimate around, awakened in the mind a feeling of tranquil pleasure in contemplating this beautiful scene in all its placid repose. The deep verdure was relieved by the bright fleeces of the sheep and lambs, which were grazing on the grassy heights ; while groups of goats, ambitious of danger, were seen securely browsing on the giddy face of the precipice, which overhung the dark rocks beneath. Here and there a cottage dimly developed its modest outline from beneath a sheltering rock ; or some tall gray spire pointed out the rural retreats of the living, or solemn sanctuaries of the dead. The peopled air above harmonized with the stillness of the scene below, and the wild wing of the sea-mew was almost suspended in its graceful sweep across the blue vault of heaven. The profound tranquillity of every thing around was suddenly

* We sincerely advise all landmen, who are ambitious of becoming “*leadsmen*” (for we have seen men of all professions, from those “*learned in the law*,” to those unlearned in the *line*, endeavouring, at the expense of their heads, to become adepts in the art of “*sounding*”), never to take their station in the chains when *beating* up to an anchorage.

invaded by sounds little in harmony with this quiet picture of nature in repose. The lengthened tenor-tones of the tars broke in upon the silence, as, lead in hand, they "sung out" from the chains the depth of water, as the ship approached the shore. These musical intonations were heard re-echoing in every little wooded dell along the bay, or clatteringly reverberating among the rocks. The still, mute sheep on the heights ceased to ruminate, or started from their pasture; collecting in groups, whose wild and unusually animated faces betokened lively alarm at these unwonted sounds.

"*Quarter-leä-ea-ess five*," cried the leadsman to leeward.

"Heave quick, my zons!" said the pilot.

"*And a ha-a-If four*," re-echoed the seaman to windward.

"She shoals her water—but we'll stand in as close as you like," observed Staunch to the pilot.

By some unaccountable accident the veteran's colours at the cottage were omitted to be hoisted at the usual hour of eight. Crank now perceiving the omission, in a hurried manner directed his factotum to hoist them. In a few moments an enormous St. George's ensign was seen gracefully waving in the wind, as if welcoming the ship's approach to the land.

In compliance with the wishes of the captain, the vessel was observed to stand in, still shoaling her water.

"*By-the-hard-dee-eeep four*," now cried the tars together, producing no unpleasing harmony from the circumstance of the 'weather leadsman' accidentally taking a musical third above his companion to leeward.

"*There!*" exultingly cried Crank to his sister-in-law—"there, didn't I tell you we'd soon have the chaps in the chains singing out like sogers?"

The brig was now tacked close under the cliff, and, to the no little astonishment of Crank, the entire evolution was performed in silence, Staunch having directed every movement by waive of hand. Two boards further to windward, brought the brig up to her destined birth, where she was anchored. The sails were soon furled, and every necessary evolution performed, with that systematic alacrity, which the cheerful, but well-disciplined crew of the

Spitfire invariably evinced ; when the boats were hoisted out, and despatched on shore for water.

In concluding this chapter, an apology may be necessary, perhaps, to some of our fair readers, who may accuse us of being uninterestingly minute in detailing the many naval evolutions recorded in the foregoing pages. The practice, however, may be productive of benefit in a quarter where it may be least expected. We have, before now, met with some of the softer sex in *command* of *men-of-war*, who still are unacquainted with the 'word of command.' To repair this defect in their early education, and adapt them for situations which are found to be within the fond aspirations of the fair ; we have ventured in these pages to substitute occasionally a marine, for a moral lesson ; so that when any of those ladies, now 'laid up in ordinary,' are next put in commission, each may be able to take the trumpet, and 'beat' and 'box' about a 'battle-ship' as well as her lord and master.

CHAPTER IX.

WEATHERING THE WILEY.

Be pleased your politics to spare,
I'm old enough, and can myself take care.

DRYDEN.

In an operation of this nature, part of the crew of the boats are, in general, sufficient for the purpose of filling the casks, and the remainder are found strolling on the beach idly whileing away the time in picking up pebbles remarkable for their shape or colour.

It was so in the present instance. Straggling seamen or tars were occupied at the water's edge in fishing, with a splinter in the sand, for a cockle or other marine production ; while at a distance from the party, a couple of tars had flung themselves, at their ease, on the gray shingle of the beach. As they lay, with their faces upturned, and

gazing listlessly on the mackerel sky, overhead, they had not noticed the approach of a stranger, whose hasty step towards them would seem to indicate he had business with them of no mean importance. He was a strong-made, bull-necked, square-built vulgar form, though sufficiently well clad to denote that he was a man of substance. His features were broad, unmeaning, and common-place, except that the bluff protuberance of the lower part of his face and pursed lips, established his claims indisputably to an unparalleled share of effrontery. His heavy, dull brows, were contracted as if in scorn; and the fixedness of his pale gray eye indicated an habitual obstinacy and sullen selfishness. For want of a companion to harangue, he seemed to be employed in that wholesome practice, so often recommended by the ancient fathers of the church—self-disputation; and endeavoured to enforce his oral powers of persuasion by an oscillatory up-and-down motion of his right hand, which strikingly resembled that of an auctioneer anxiously dwelling on the rival biddings which were to swell his profits. In his left hand he held a scroll of extracts from parliamentary returns of the revenue—the income of the clergy—the number and effective strength of our land and sea forces—the number of persons impressed since the war—corporal punishments inflicted during the short pece—the ultimate height, in inches and lines, which climbing-boys attain when arrived at the age of manhood—the gross amount, in square feet, of timber usually expended in May-poles in the several villages of England, and the average waste of wood, in barber's blocks, throughout the United Kingdom. These had been carefully extracted during a tour with his family along the coast in his own carriage, and with his own cattle, to save charges of postage; and were destined to form the ground-work next session of an exposition, in his place at St. Stephen's Chapel, Westminster, of the causes of the dry rot in his His Majesty's navy.

The diffusiveness of his style might, perhaps, be objected to by common critics; but it was his peculiar felicity, in every speech, to follow the example of that illustrious essayist of the middle ages, so admired for his searching sagacity, who having copiously written an essay—*de omnibus rebus*—sapiently added a chapter, *de quibusdam aliis*.

In the light playfulness of his fancy, this ornament of our senate introduced a figurative allusion to the effects of the dry rot in thinning the ranks of that opposition with which he voted. By way of revenging himself for many an indignant lash of a great oratorical lion's tail in that house, whose sarcasms were sometimes felt alike by friend and foe, he had bestowed a week in turning an appropriately neat epigrammatic point; happily illusive to an insincerity and hollowness in principle, which it suited his purpose to assume, were attributes of his too powerful rival and unsparing friend. The spirit of the allusion consisted in preserving the accuracy of the figure, and deploring that the rottenness of our timber was not confined to that composing our ships of war, but had been of late detected in some of the main timbers of Westminster Hall.

Such, and so accoutred, was the redoubted wight who now bore down on two of the most unsuspecting spirits in the "service." As he never balked at any thing, he assumed a familiarity of manner and tone, which he presumed would conciliate favour, or lull suspicion; and artfully opened his parliamentary inquiries as follows.

"Weel—messmates—hot waather, eh?"

"Why, yes," said the younger tar of the two,—*"it's hot enough for them as never felt hotter; or seed a beaf-staike broiled by the heat of the sun on the spare anchor fluke. I reckon."* added he, accompanying the remark with what sailors term an overhaul-look at the senator's person—"I reckon many's the fiery forenoon *you've* never faced, afore the sea-breeze sot in at Port-Royal harbour."

"Aweel! mayhap—but many's the fiery ordeel in the whiles I elsewhere faced in fighting yer battles," returned the senator, emphatically.

"*You,*" said the tar, in a tone which manifested an incredulous contempt for the stranger's assertion—"you'—what, d'ye want to come Trafflygar over a fellow?—Where the h—ll did you ever see a shot fired in anger?"

"It's contrarie to my creed to do aught in anger—for though I am an enemy to a' abuses——"

"I'm not abusing you at all, man," interrupted the tar—"I want no words about the matter; but I'll bet you

a week's grog to all your worth in the world, you can't clap a cartridge in a gun—that's to say,—you don't know whether it should be 'end* foremost,' and 'seam down,' or not."

"Seem doon!—I tell ye what, my gude fallow, we don't a'together seem *up* to ane-anither," said the senator sporting a miserable pun—"but, ye see, I'm a plain man; and, ye see—

"You may say *plain*," said the tar, interrupting the speaker in his sentence—"I see *that* fast enough; and what's more,—I'm curs'd if I wouldn't carve a better figure-head out of a Sampson's post."†

"Like enoo; but I suspect yer acceptionation of feegur heeds is verra defferent frae mine—for you must ken, that my notion of a feegur heed, is the heed that taks the trooble to seft the public accoonts, an' expose the corrupt practices o' the folk in pooer."

The animated tone in which this piece of radical cant was delivered, was completely lost upon *Jack*. Indeed, the orator might as well have whistled to the wind, as have tried, in this vein, to engage either the attention of the slumbering tar, or appeal to the passions of his talkative companion. The conversation had ceased for a moment; when the sailor, who had carried on the colloquy stretched supinely on his back, now turned suddenly round on his elbow, and sternly fixing his eyes on the legislator, exclaimed—

"Here's face you, as Geoffry did the cat—come, tell truth, and shame the devil?—Are you a reg'lar built 'missioner, or only a marchant's man-hunter,—'Kase, if so be you're no more nor a crimp, you'd better brace-up and haul aft afore the officer comes across your hawse—but say you're a *journeyman* parson, and I'll souse you in the surf; and trace you up on a tree to dry, like a swab in the sun."

"That's no the speech of a seaman, nor is 't becomin'

* If the professional reader be too fastidious, or overnice on the score of correct phraseology, he will doubtless substitute here that more emphatic monosyllable, which his critical recollection will not fail to suggest. So did, in fact, the sailor.—But for us—*proh pudor!*

† A large block of timber fixed upright between the decks, used for attaching leading ropes to, or heavy purchases.

in a man-o-war's-man's smooth," said the Scotchman, rather ruffled at his rude reception.

"What do *you* know concerning man-o-war's-men, you Highland lubber;" said Jones, who had hitherto slumbered in silence, but whose sensibility was now roused by the senator's rebuke.—"Did you ever sarve as a Jack-i-the-dust in a guard ship?" added the tar in a sneering tone.

"No, my man, but I ken mare of king's sheps, and a' the pratty pranks that's played aboard 'em, than ye perhaps thenk.—I'm a sailor's freend, and ha' proven it."

"You've a d——d rum way o' showing it, then," said the younger tar, "in running down the sarvice after that sort o' fashion."

"I rin it doon!—You mistak, my man—sailors are mare indetted to me than they thenk. Whenever I've seen, as aften I have, an inclination to trample them, or their rights, underfoot, I've stood your sooporter, and aways spoke up for you i' th' Hoose."

"Well, Bill! I'm blowed if I knows what house he means," said the elder tar, who now evinced an anxiety to take up the cudgels and give his companion a spell of repose,—"*bekase*," added he, "a fellow might as well tread on a snake at once, as try to trample on any o' the *Spitfires*, either at the Nelson's Head, at North Corner,* or the Two Jolly Tars at the back o' the Pint."†

"Why, ye booby, do ye thenk the hoose I mean, is a public, or mere pot-house? I'm spaaking anent that assembly that awght to defend, on a' occasions, your rights and prèvleeges, and grant to the nat'ral, and, gev me leave to say, the constitutional force of the kintry, (for I mean sailors,) its constant protection."

"Come, come, belay every inch o' that," said Jones, in a jocular tone—"you're not a-going to palaver us about your protections—many's the man we've seen pressed in spite of his *protection*—havr't we Bill?"

"I believe you, my bo," replied his companion. "I've seed, afore now, a hot-press on the river, break through a protection, better backed, aye, nor ever was a battle ship's anchor. Why, I've seed the day that a fellow couldn't

* At Plymouth. † Portsmouth Point—the Wapping district at that port.

save his beacon, even with a Trinity House protection in his pocket."

"Well," said Jones, "if men are slack in stays* in coming for'ard to enter, what else have you for it? Men-o'-war must be manned, to meet the enemy, and protect your trade."

"Noo, to spaak without reserve," said the prying inquisitor, imagining Jones was more disposed to be rational than his blunt, honest companion—"wur ye aways o' that mind, Sir?"

"No—'kase if I had, and known as much as I do now, I'd a bore up at once for the *bounty*. But you see," added the taunting tar, throwing a sly look at the senator,—"there 's always fellows enough, both *ashore* and afloat to make a man discontented with his birth; and make him believe, 'whither or no Tom Collins'†—aye, by George, in spite of his sight and senses, that a king's ship is never no better nor a reg'lar-built hell afloat."

"But, my freend," said the stranger, who now perceived there was little chance to storm, though he might succeed, perhaps, in sapping, the honest sailor's prejudices in favour of his profession, "ye wunna deny that seamen have to pit up with a great deal o' tarrannical conduc an' ell usage aboard king's sheps—for my ain pert, I con-seeder you 're a' verra leetle better off than the blacks of Africa."

"See here, shipmate! it would take a fellow far further north nor yourself, to persuade the captain's black steward that *his* was the worst birth in the barky. And as for ill usage aboard o' men-o'-war—why—let every one speak as they find 'em—not that I take it *you* know much o' the matter—'kase I reckon, by that ere roll o' paper under your lee-fin, you've sarved more time behind the counter, nor ever you did before the mast—"

"Weel, but as we say in the Heelands, let that flee stick i' th' wa, and confass, es there no a deal o' cruelty and tarranny aboard king's sheps?"

"Well! *damme*," said Jones, emphatically, "but *now*

* Slow.

† "Whither or no, Tom Collins," is a phrase among sailors, signifying, whether you will or not.

think you 're a reg'lar-built 'missioner, in earnest—what say you, Bill?"

"Well, so I said, just now," returned the other—"but then, again, on t'other tack—you see he doosn't sport a black suit o' rigging."

"To pit an end to your doots," said the Scotchman, "you 'll just plaise to obsarve, that I've no disguese a boot me—I 'm a freend to the sarvice, and, in parteeklar, to seamen—I've stood up for them i' the Hoose—"

"There he goes again," interrupted Jones.

"Aye," I repeat, "in the Hoose, against their ain officers, and the Lairds o' th' Admiralty. I've endeavour'd to put doon the sestum of impressment, and to annechelat that tarrannical ineclitary practice of corporal punishment."

"What military practice?" indignantly ejaculated the younger tar—"What d'ye want to come the *lobster* over us, as well as the lubber?—Who ever heard of a *corporal* handling the cat---the sergeant, to be sure, when there 's never no master-a'tarms aboard, in course, tallies the score—but, damn it, man, it's the boson's mate as sarves-out the slops---

"Weel, weel---it's indiffernt to me wha inflects the lash:---a' as I can say is, I deetest the sestum of flogging a'thegither;---an' to show ye hoo much I tak' an interest in the sarvice, I've browght you a peeteetion to sign, which I've drawn up to show hoo hardly yu'r treated, and how cruelly yu'r, too often, poonished by tarrannical officers, and hoo closely and unnecessaraly ye're confined to yeer sheps.---Noo es that the pairt of a freend, or no?"

Here Jones interrupted the reply which was ready to start from his shipmate's lips, and, in a conciliatory tone, accosted him—

"Yow see the gemman speaks fair enough, after all. He only wants us to lean a little over to his side—and why not, Bill! if the gemman 'ill stand any thing?"

"Why, if that's his drift--I think we may as well, too, try him on a wind. See here, shipmate," continued the speaker, addressing the senator---"there 's never no use in any further palaver---I don't care a curse which way it is---but, what 'll you give us?"

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"Gie ye?" cried the radical orator, whose incipient triumph was checked by the unpalatable suggestion of a pecuniary boon,—“Wull it not be the manes of getting ye yeer leeberty?”

“Why, as to that, you see, we’ve always ‘*liberty*’ enough when the ship’s noored in a King’s port—so, you see, that’s not the thing—is it, Jem?”

“Why, no!” said Jones,—“but as the weather’s warm, and our coppers hot, I doesn’t care, if the gemman will act like a gemman, to clinch the concarn at once. Har-kee, Master,” said he, addressing the anxious orator, who stood tiptoe in expectation of his proposition—“you shall have it *all your own way for a glass of grog.*”

A fitful change suddenly overcame the features of the calculating philanthropist: every hard line in that unusually rigid face was, for a moment, relaxed; and, from the whole external, it would seem his heart had been startled by the apparition of a strange and unwelcome visitant. It was not till after a momentary struggle, that he slowly unbuttoned his pocket. The hand, although inserted, seemed to clutch something, and again relaxed its grasp. Again the action was repeated;

“Well,” said he, in a subdued tone—“Its for the banefet of ma kintry—”

By a convulsive twitch of the arm, the victory was completed; and with a sigh, such as ’tis said accompanies the separation of soul and body, the patriot flung the sailor a shilling.

The sigh, however, though not the shilling, was lost on the sailors: who, roused from their recumbent posture on the shingle by a signal to re-embark, with a loud laugh at the senator’s credulity, rejoined, without signing the petition, their companions, who, having completed the watering, bore away in the boats for the brig.

CHAPTER X.

PHILANDERING, OR AMATORY POLITICS.

Oh ! the long evenings of duets and trios !
 The admirations and the speculations ;
 The "Mamma Mio's !" and "Amor Mio's !"
 The "Tanti palpiti's," on such occasions.

BYRON.

THE continuation of fine weather, and a steady calm, of above a week's duration, left the *Spitfire's* people ample opportunity to prosecute the task of refitting the vessel ; and, happily for Burton, kept open the communication between the brig and Camperdown Cottage. Every evening some pretext or other served for his appearing an unbidden, though not unwelcome, guest to both Emily and her uncle.—There is a certain footing of familiarity, upon which persons soon get, who are pleased with each other's society ; which precludes the necessity of renewing a formal invitation at every parting ; more especially in the country, or under circumstances which lead the parties to infer, these opportunities will not hereafter be of frequent recurrence. The old gentleman was absolute master of his own house, or, as he used to term it, "captain of his own ship ;" and, as respected the individuals of his profession, was eminently hospitable ; so that, although he never re-invited his young friend, at parting, he always chid him on his appearance in the evening, for not having availed himself of the general invitation given on the first day of their acquaintance, and made one at the dinner table. Indeed, the veteran would jocosely say, it was his own fault if he did not join the party at the cottage, as he observed, "Tom Tiller never neglected, according to the custom of the service in his time, to hoist the dinner flag in the garden ; so that any seaman, who

was hungry, could not mistake the signal." Burton's only mode of parrying this cordiality was, to repeat his sense of obligation, and plead the necessity he was under of attending to the details of duty on board: an attention which, he observed, was rendered the more imperative on the officers of the ship, in consequence of Captain Staunch's having resorted to refit, contrary to the practice of the service, to Dartmouth, which was not a King's port.

This apology never failed to draw forth from Crank a remonstrance on the impropriety of departing from the practice in his day—notwithstanding the cogent reasons which Burton had given for this preference, and which the reader may recollect.

Had Burton been an ordinary, or uninterested visiter at the cottage, he perhaps would have formed one of the dinner party daily; or, at least, whenever he could obtain permission from his captain. But, circumstanced as he felt himself, he inferred he should feel more at his ease in 'dropping in' after this meal was concluded. His visits were sufficiently numerous and protracted to develope, as he thought, to Mrs. Crank, the real state of his feelings with respect to her daughter; and as he had no reason to imagine himself a favourite, or, in other words, his fortunes acceptable in the light of a son-in-law to that politic lady, he contented himself with thus embracing the opportunity of visiting, and enjoying Emily's society, without incurring any more serious obligation. The uncle, on whose bounty she was dependent, far from being alarmed at these visits, or partaking in the prudential scruples of his sister, felt rather flattered by the attentions thus markedly paid to his favourite; nor was it without some share of professional pride that he witnessed the preference Emily displayed for the intelligent lieutenant. She appeared to enter into the spirit of any little professional controversy in which the commodore and his young friend sometimes engaged: and even presumed, on some occasions, to mediate between them, by suggesting that their amicable differences were easily to be reconciled, by taking into consideration the difference of the systems adopted by the profession, in her uncle's time, and in the present day. This assumption of the office of arbitrator, in nautical mat-

ters, the gallant old officer always treated as a piece of pretty impertinence on the part of his niece; and, while in his waggish way, he used to scold her for a sea lawyer, he, at other times, fondly ransacked all his classic recollections from "Steel's Navy List," to dub her by the names of his favourite vessels in the service. On one occasion, his partiality so far overcame his prudence, as to induce him to ask the young lieutenant, in a way which Burton thought happily equivocal, if not positively allusive to an union which already was beginning to be near his heart—"whether the girl, on a pinch, would not make a pretty fair specimen of a 'Reefer,' or pass, in time, for a *Luft*."

To secure his growing interest with the old gentleman: or perhaps as much through an anxiety to make some return for his kindness, Burton gave him a barometer, on an improved principle; graduated according to both Reaumer's and Fahrenheit's scale, which he had the gratification to perceive soon occupied a chosen site in his own chamber. But the present which Crank most valued, was one which cost Burton not a little labour in the preparation, and consisted in a complete code of the newly-adopted signals, illustrated handsomely with coloured graphic exemplifications of the various flags, cornets, and pendants, in use: which, with their order, and almost infinite series of relative positions, render them so comprehensive a medium of telegraphic communication. As Burton had spared no pains in making the interior of the work valuable, he had recourse to one of the topmen, who, before he ran away to sea, served half an apprenticeship to a book-binder; in order to render its exterior worthy of the contents. Their joint labours produced a pretty volume of gilt Bath letter paper, neatly bound in blue and gold; the materials for which had recklessly been abstracted by the lieutenant from a new morocco portfolio; purchased, when last at Plymouth, to preserve his marine sketches and drawings from the profane clutches of shipmates in shaving.

The value of this present was enhanced by the compliment which accompanied its first presentation; and its perusal formed regularly a part of the veteran's morning avocations. Insensibly his prejudices against Burton, as

a votary of innovation, and enemy to the fame of the ancient worthies of the profession, began to give way to kindlier feelings, and an admiration of the intelligent young seaman. Although the ardour with which he defended the old school never abated, the lieutenant perceived it was rather the effect of pride, reluctant to yield to a junior on points of service, than of a consciousness of being his young friend's superior in any thing but in standing. His time, too, now never lay heavy on his hands; and the listlessness which so often attends the retirement of men accustomed to the activity of a professional life, was completely chased away by his renewed studies, the frequent visits of Burton, and the constant inspection of the little man-of-war below, from the grass-plot; where his frequent perambulations had accurately marked out eight paces in the decayed verdure. In these excursions he was often accompanied by his fair niece, whose awakened curiosity, with respect to nautical matters, afforded him daily increased delight; not without a mixture of regret that she had not been a boy: as nothing else, in his opinion, was wanting to ensure her being, at the least, a Rear-Admiral.

The lieutenant needed hardly any other apology for the frequency of his visits at the cottage, beyond the kind welcome he always experienced from its owner; and yet he felt it due to himself to provide some pretext for availing himself of opportunities for enjoying the society of Emily alone. Her musical talents were considerable; and, in this respect, much pains had been taken with her education. She played with spirit; and her ambition for display induced her to devote much more time to the study of music, than is usual with young ladies escaped from the tedious sameness of boarding-school discipline. Her voice was a clear and sweet soprano, of considerable compass; and sufficiently flexible to enable her to accomplish executional passages, with a facility which perhaps too often induced her to indulge rather profusely in ornament. Singing was an accomplishment, beyond all others, best suited to the taste of Burton, who, from early youth, had contracted a passion for music, which he had matured by the facilities afforded him during a long continuance on

the Mediterranean station. Here, whenever in harbour, his associates were selected from among the amateurs of that art, which, with the Italians, is styled, by way of eminence, 'divine.' Being once imbued with the true principles of the art, his taste rapidly improved, and the feeling with which, in his first essays, he sung the popular airs of Mozart, Cimarosa, and others, was softened, by increasing judgment, into all the mellow richness of Italian perfection. It was not wonderful, with such tastes, that Emily and he found themselves often alone, exploring the beauties of Italian composition, to which every other ear in the house was comparatively indifferent; and that, independently of other motives of preference, the society of each became mutually valuable to the other.

The hours of every succeeding evening flew rapidly by, until the dusky dimness of fading twilight deprived them of this pretext for prolonging their studies alone; and those enemies to unreserved communication, candles, obtrusively poured their unwelcome glare on every conscious feature.

It must, however, be confessed, that the sentiments they felt for each other were as dissimilar as their sex. Emily found it impossible to withhold from him her admiration and esteem. She, however, went no further: and her conduct towards him would scarcely warrant any inference, that she felt more than a decided preference for his society; while the kindling fervour of his growing attachment displayed itself hourly, by every possible effort to awaken her interest, and recommend himself to her esteem.

Although eminently calculated to awaken a fervent and absorbing passion in others, there was a self-possession, and, at times, a levity in her manner, which seemed to indicate that she could not so easily become (to use a metaphysical distinction) its subject, as its object. Neither was it likely that a girl of her ambition and desire of distinction should be much flattered, as far as respected his present rank or circumstances, by the attentions of a young officer, whose fortune was to be cut out by his sword; and who could not parry the objection, as to want of wealth, by an appeal to his hereditary influence, or high family connection, which is sometimes considered as its

equivalent. She too, it is to be recollected, though left an orphan, without a guinea, had long since learned to consider herself an heiress, as well as to appreciate her marked superiority in point of accomplishments above her young acquaintances.

There was one person in the family, who, could she have considered the connection probable, would certainly have shown her disinclination to it in the most decided way. This was her mother; but she never suffered herself to believe that her daughter could so lightly estimate her attractions, or undervalue her expectations, as to think of Burton, but in the light of an intelligent, agreeable acquaintance; whose company, as she could enjoy it but for a very short period, she was the more disposed to turn to advantage. Indeed, it was to be doubted, whether old Crank himself, partial as he was to the profession in general, and his new acquaintance in particular, would have consented, upon an affair of so much consequence, to waive the strong objections there existed to so unequal a union.

An apprehension that such might be the real state of both the mother and uncle's feelings, restrained the lieutenant from any avowal of a passion, which, if disclosed ere he had secured an interest in Emily's affection, might have disappointed all his hopes. Besides, his natural ardour prompted him to rely on the display of his acquirements, his assiduities, and his devotion, in secret, to a girl, who, young as she was, possessed a very considerable share of self-esteem, and who appeared to think too highly of herself, and was too impatient of control, not to have resented as an insult his attempting to derive any influence, in such a delicate conjuncture, from the avowed countenance of her uncle to his suit. That the veteran might, in time, become an auxiliary, he had reason to hope; but his consent to a union with his niece would, he knew, be prospective, and only conditional on his obtaining promotion; while he was aware there was a positive obstacle to his wishes in the mother, who, with all her sectarian saintliness, felt the value of "this world's goods;" and having herself a proud spirit, and a lofty ambition, imagined her daughter possessed sufficient mental and personal attractions, independently of her excellent expectations, to command a distinguished alliance.

CHAPTER XII.

A VISIT AFLOAT.

"There he arriving, round about doth lie,
And takes survey with busy, curious eye;
Now this, now that, he tasteth tenderly."

SPENSER.

THE watering of the ship being now completed, and her rigging 'set up' and refitted, Crank, yielding to the lieutenant's powers of persuasion, at length consented to accompany his family on a visit afloat. The forenoon following had been fixed for this aquatic excursion; and as Burton had on one or two occasions apprized his commander and Hasty that the veteran was no ordinary critic in nautical matters, though of the old school; more than usual preparations for his reception had been meditated by the senior lieutenant.

Indeed Hasty was one of those officers, not unfrequently found in the service, more scrupulously strict in the enforcement of trifling commands, than studiously attentive to duties of greater importance. Having passed his noviciate under a rigid disciplinarian, the slightest omissions were considered by him unpardonable transgressions. Neglecting to sweep down the decks ere the sound of the bell had ceased to vibrate upon the ear, (for every half hour Hasty had the birch-brooms in busy requisition) or even not removing an Irish pennant, or straggling rope-yarn from the rigging, were, in the first lieutenant's opinion, punishable offences of considerable enormity. Such was the acute effect trifles of this nature produced on his official sensitiveness, that either a feverish fretfulness, or a short-lived fit of severe discipline, was sure to follow any slight error, or unintentional disobedience of orders. He was less of a seaman than Burton; indeed, to compare them together, as expert officers, would be an injustice to the latter. Hasty was not (as is customary in the service)

selected by his captain: the captain found him, like any other timber head, a fixture in the ship. As, however, he exerted himself to the utmost to satisfy his superior, Staunch was of too noble and generous a spirit to displace him on his accession, for another, who perhaps might have surpassed him in system and seamanship, but certainly not in valour. In a soldier or a sailor, courage, like charity, covers a multitude of sins; and it is not in human nature, (and more particularly with men exposed to constant danger, and whose lives are continually dependant on the conduct of their superiors,) to be indifferent to the achievements of personal prowess. He was, therefore, in virtue of his office, recognised by the crew as the captain's viceregent: nor was the delegate unconscious of his power or post. As heir apparent to the state, he often fancied himself in actual possession of the crown, which, had he possessed, never could the prophecy of King Henry the Fourth to his son, have been more literally fulfilled, where he chides him for his eagerness, and exclaims, according to Shakspeare,

“ Oh, foolish youth!

Thou seekest the greatness that will overwhelm thee.”

The master passion overpowered him, more particularly, in his dreams; and his involuntary midnight confessions betrayed too audibly his aspiring propensities to power and place. In the stilly hour of the midwatch, when nothing without was heard, save the gentle rippling of the water, as the vessel glided under easy sail through the tranquil sea, or the cheering cry of the quarter master's “very well thyst” on deck, the occupants of the cabin adjoining his own, were frequently roused from their rosy slumbers by violent noises and thumpings against the bulkheads, accompanied by many an imprecation against sleeping tars (himself a sleeper) for neglecting to perform their duty while employed, as his wandering fancy idly imagined, in taking on board a freight of Spanish dollars and doubloons for account of the West India merchants *

“D——n your bloods!” said he, on one occasion, im-

* This is the most profitable service on which a commander of his majesty's ships can be employed. The risk is trifling and the percentage liberal; and, with the exception of the admiral on the station, and Greenwich Hospital, the freight is the captain's exclusive perquisite.

aging he was addressing a launch's crew alongside, "if a single box slips through those slings, I'll make the man that slings it jump overboard, and watch like a buoy in the water till it is grappled again."

From seductive dreams of dominion such as these, it would be vain to expect any thing could rouse him to a sense of his subaltern situation, short of the hoarse tones of the mate of the watch, summoning him to turn out and relieve on deck.

Such is the outline of the character of the second officer on board the *Spirfire*; and, from actual observation, it it may not be presumption to assert that he is not without his parallel in the service.

"Come," said the officer just described, addressing the captain of the afterguard on the evening previous to the veteran's visit—let 's have all the holy stones and bibles aft, to muster in a minute. We must give the decks a double dose in the morning."

The aforesaid captain scratched his head, made a vain endeavour to smooth his stubborn curly-pate, and bowed a forced assent. And now brooms, buckets, bibles, swabs, and holy stones were brought aft, and carefully placed under the sentinel's charge, as if these inanimate objects had been gifted with a locomotive power; or had been so long at sea, that there was just reason to dread they were disposed to mutiny in the night, or desert before morning.*

A little after four o'clock, or as it is termed, the time for 'turning the hands up,' the dead silence of the 'tween decks was invaded by the unmusical notes of the boat-swain rousing the ship's company from their heavy sleep.

"Rouze-and-bit—rouze-and-bit—show a leg,"—"out or down," with other 'terms of inamage,' resounded along the births as the enemy of Somnus cut short the dreams of his companions in arms, some of whom were disporting themselves in green fields and shadowy woods, or perambulating the populous streets of Portsmouth or the metropolis; while others were, by the aid of delusive fancy, seated beside Nell, or Poll, or Nance, with a 'stiff

* Doubtless some few matter-of-fact first lieutenants will quarrel with us for making this a subject of banter.

glass of grog' before them, in a snug room at the 'back of the Point,' or merrily footing 'Delcaro's,' or the 'College hornpipe,' to the 'enlivening tones of the viol.' All these spells were dissolved in a second, while many a growl and muttered imprecation were levelled against the consecrated head of the boatswain for his unwelcome intrusion. Resistance, however, was never thought of; and, in obedience to the summons, the seamen thrust a leg from their hammocks, whose manly mould might have shamed the best muscular specimens of the school of Phidias, or jumped clean out of their pendant dormitories, and commenced 'rigging.' Had the captain and crew been all disciples of Mahomed, they could not have set apart for washing an hour in the twenty-four more consonant to the principles of the mosque.

The sun had just risen, as if in time to witness the pious ablutions the decks were about to undergo. They were now wetted, and sprinkled with a light layer of sand all over. Heavy pieces of Portland stone, with ropes attached to their ends, were hauled to and fro over the wet sand by a detached crew of fourteen men, seven aside, while two or three little barefooted middys, with their trowsers tucked up to their knees, were seen paddling about, superintending the holy-haul of the squads engaged on this duty. Here and there a topman, and sometimes a 'Royal' in scarlet, were observed, bible in hand, on their knees, washing out the *Spitfire's* stains, and as it were, cleansing the ways of the wicked. The discordant noises created by these great blocks, some of which weighed nearly a hundred weight, as they ground down the solid oak of the decks, now grated harshly over its large nails, or occasionally jolted against a ring-bolt with a report which failed not to draw down on the offenders the shrill malediction of some little myrmidon in office, were, to the nicely attuned fibres of the first lieutenant's ear, sounds sweet as the fabled music of the spheres.

As soon as the fervency of this operation had subsided, and the rinsing and swabbing of the decks of the vessel had been completed large pieces of canvass were spread and carpeted all over her planks, lest any unhal-towed tread should leave the slightest soil behind.

The sails had been furled afresh, and the yards, from the highest to the lowest, were squared, and re-squared again and again: nor could the most fastidious or accurate eye have detected any want of precision in their parallelism---circumstances attributable to the superior tact of the boatswain of the *Spitfire*, who was not only "war-ranted" sound, but free from the vice of obliquity of vision.

The ship was now ready for the nicest inspection; and, as it happened to be Thursday (a day which, whenever the duty permitted, Staunch allowed to be kept as a holy-day*), the crew were attired in their Sunday, or best mustering suit.

The signal man on the look out had previously received his instructions from Burton, and now reported, "a move was making ashore." How he obtained this information it was not difficult to divine, for it had been a rule long established by Crank, and implicitly observed by Tiller, that if he only left home for an hour, his colours should be struck till his return.

Dinner had hardly been piped, ere Crank, to save his tide (and not his pea-sonp, as the purser had cynically hinted), was seen with his party, accompanied by Burton, shoving off from the shore in his long five-oared yawl: proud of his ancient honours, when coxswain to the captain of a line-of-battle-ship, Tiller acted the part of steersman on the occasion. At first, the tar, making the most of his one eye, was observed in his little box abaft, lowly seated and nearly bent double; but on his drawing within discipline range of the 'man-o'-war's buoy,' he changed his cowering posture for an erect attitude, as if to apprise the ship's crew of the respect due to his honoured master and the freight he had under his charge.—With his left hand to his hat, and his right on the helm, Tiller stood (to use a simile of Stowel's, the maser, as he viewed him with waggish delight from the deck,) "a stiff in the step as a well stayed stick."

* In well disciplined ships of war, many officers devote a certain day in the week, purposely, that the crew 'may overhaul their bags,' and repair their clothes.

A bustle, if such it could be called, was now observed on the *Spitfire's* deck.

"Forecastle there!" cried Hasty, addressing the boatswain—"mind," added he, with a marked emphasis, "you keep the *head* clear, when the ladies are coming alongside."

The loud earnestness of this caution, did not fail to awaken the curiosity of Emily, who addressed herself to her uncle for its explanation: Crank, who was observed stifling a laugh at the mystic meaning of this monition, which it was never intended should have reached the tintinnabulum of a female ear, was anticipated in his explanation by Burton, who promptly assured her that it was all meant as a compliment to the fair sex, with a view to caution the men on the fore-castle to have their *wits* about them when the ladies arrived alongside.

Old Tiller, who was not so easily cajoled, and relished a joke in his heart, could stand it no longer—so laughed outright, but as suddenly checked himself on seeing Burton frown.

Emily looked incredulously in her uncle's face—

Mrs. Crank took the explanation like a shrewd woman, exclaiming—"Dear me! how very considerate."

Crank merely hemmed.

The chair destined to transport the ladies aloft, had been already slung in red ropes, and, decorated with tassels *à la Prusse* and 'Turks' heads,' in compliment to the fair, was now 'brought to the gangway,' though not 'seized up.' Flags of all colours and nations were placed in it to enshrine the fair form of Emily, and conceal the waning charms of her mother. In order to plump the gangway, the main-yard had been braced a little forward, a precaution necessary to allow the '*whip*' to hang over the heads of the ladies, as they now arrived alongside.

After no little fuss, and becoming share of feminine terrors had been displayed on the occasion, which the gallant lieutenant had great difficulty in allaying, Emily at length, yielding to the entreaties of her mother, (whose right of precedence was only relinquished from feelings of fear,) contentedly resigned her pretty person to her ad-

mirer, and submitted to the operation of being, as sailors express it, 'slung for shipping.'

Burton, who was as busy as a bee, sipping sweets from the flower, appeared to indulge in a little unnecessary delay, while enfolding Emily as if she had been added to the constellations, among the stars of an American ensign, and confining her little feet in the bushing buntin. This was not unnoticed by Crank, who, pushing the lieutenant playfully aside, remarked with a laugh that—"young men were, now-a-days, like lapdogs, once down at the feet of a lady, and there was no getting them up."

Perceiving Emily all prepared for her aerial ascent, he addressed himself to Hasty, who was then looking over the side—"Come, Sir," said he, "off she goes."

At the word, the rope, from which the chair containing the now agitated girl had been suspended, was carried with a smooth and rapid motion aloft, through the block on the yard overhead, and, as if by a species of *legerdemain*, the fair Emily was suddenly 'whipped' away from her petrified parent, (who was observed declining her head on the sympathizing bosom of the doctor,) and as suddenly transported to the giddy regions above, motionless with terror. After soaring stationary like a hawk on the wing for a few seconds, she was lowered easily on deck, and released from her confinement, by Staunch, who welcomed her with all the easy politeness and affability peculiar to a well bred gentleman.

No sooner had the chair been lighted of its fair load, than it was again lowered over the side to receive if not so heavenly a freight, indisputably a more pious piece of goods. Indeed the matron was sticking, like one of his own leeches, to Senna, who already felt a distaste to this party of pleasure; and Mrs. Crank, though her tongue had long been accustomed to run on familiarly upon the necessity of turning her thoughts to things above, could not be induced to raise her eyes *aloft*. Neither the arguments of Senna, founded on the safety of her daughter's flight on board, nor the assurances of Burton, could remove from her mind, the apprehension that the rope would break.—Indeed, she argued the point so consistently, that she very unguardedly, considering the doctor



was the party addressed, appealed more than once to their disparity, in point of weight and size, to justify her suspicions she should not be as fortunate as Emily in her ascent.

"Brother! brother!" she reproachfully exclaimed, as Senna handed her to the 'whip'—"How cruel of you to bring me to this!"

"Bring you to *what*?" cried Crank, petulantly, impatient at this needless alarm.—"Hang it, you make as much fuss about the matter, as if they were going to clap the rope round your neck, and run you up to the yard-arm!"

This broadside had the desired effect—Senna was silent; and the fair sufferer reluctantly consigning, like other criminals, her body to the surgeon, she, as though it were her last dying request, implored Burton 'to go quiet with the rope.'

The same signal was repeated.

"Off she goes," reiterated the delighted Crank.

"Away with her now," bellowed the boatswain, "handsomely a bit—what are you side-boys about, that you don't bear off the chains!—There you are—whip away now."

This incongruous collision of professional terms, so capable of misapplication, as to their actual meaning, was likely enough to bewilder the fancy of a woman, from previous circumstances already excited. The hoarse bawling of the boatswain; the strange misapplication of the term, "handsomely," to her unhandsome treatment, in being hoisted on board like a wool-pack; her terror at finding herself at the mercy of boys; animals, in her opinion, as mischievous as monkeys, all conspired to make her unconscious of what she was to do or suffer. The allusion, however, to chains, was not lost on her, but produced a singular association in her mind, for when landed on deck, it was perceived she had, ludicrously enough, still got hold of the only one within her reach,—a small Maltese, gold neck-chain, to which her "quizzing-glass" was appended.

The little party had scarcely been introduced by Burton to his captain, and walked three paces towards the "companion" or stair leading to the cabin, ere an exclamation burst from Emily's lips, similar to that which never fails to fall from every female, on viewing, for the first time, the brilliant whiteness of a man-of-war's deck;—

heightened by contrast with the parallel black lines intersecting its ample breadth, with a regularity whose pleasing effect on the eye, was not exceeded by the most tasteful chalkings of a modern ball-room floor.

"What a charming place for a dance!" said she, pointing her toe, and stepping more firmly on the advanced foot, as if to try the elasticity of the planks.

"Perhaps," said Staunch, "as you appear an amateur, we may be able, ere leaving the port, to make up a small party on board in our plain way : and you, Madam," added he, turning to Mrs. Crank, "will, I hope, condescend to favour us with your presence, as lady patroness."

The courteous manner of Staunch's invitation threw the matron off her guard, and she already appeared, by a slight inclination of her head, to acquiesce, in the nomination, despite of her principles.

Emily frankly confessed, she should be quite delighted to 'dance with Ariel on the waves,' adding, "it would be *tout à fait* an agreeable novelty."

The captain had now taken her unresisting hand, and presumed to express a hope, that his lameness would not deprive him of the honour of opening the ball with her.

Influenced, perhaps, by the barometer of Burton's countenance, which, she perceived, fell suddenly at this proposition, she hesitatingly observed ; that "it would be rather premature to form any positive engagement, on the bare possibility of such an occurrence."

The captain, piqued by this observation, pledged himself to remove the force of that objection, by fixing a day before they left the ship.

The company descended, by Staunch's invitation, to partake of some refreshments prepared in his cabin. Crank, whose eye wandered inquisitively about him in all directions, mutely accepted the civilities of his affable host ; but Emily appeared delighted with the novelty of the scene, and every thing on board ; nor did she seem altogether insensible to Staunch's frank and fascinating manners. Her admiration of his captain, was quickly perceived by Burton. The influence of the 'green-eyed monster' had already darkened his brow, and dimmed the brilliancy of his eye. He was, for some time, reserved

and silent. The ardour which characterized his attentions, perceptibly abated; and had not it been for a kind and re-assuring glance from the object of his devotion, it might have fallen to our lot, as the chroniclers of these events, to record his having, during the night, slipped slily over the side in a fit of despair; and being reported among the missing at muster.

The repast being ended, Crank now appearing impatient to pursue his inspection of the ship, the party again re-assembled on deck. As Stauneli had not as yet sufficiently recovered from his lameness, to accompany Crank in his critical tour, Hasty supplied the place of his captain; while Burton and Emily kept in the back-ground, in the rear of Senna and her mother.

In his present mood, it may be presumed, that very little was necessary to occasion an explosion of the veteran's critical bile. The 'sights' on the guns, first attracting his notice, he inquired of Hasty, "What these gim-cracks meant." The lieutenant informed him, "that they were termed sights, and used for the purpose of enabling the men to take aim with nicer precision."

"Sights, indeed!" cried Crank; "*I* never saw such *sights*! Well, it may be an improvement to be sure—fighting at long balls with mounted telescopes. I know, in my time, we were above such cold-blooded, cowardly butchery. No! No! Sir; d—n all such stand-off work—come, muzzle to muzzle—that's my maxim; follow up that sort o' *fun*, and you'll soon riddle your opponent."

"That's a' vera weel, Sir," said Stowel, in a broad Newcastle accent, as he had just fallen into the veteran's train; "but what'er you to do," asked the master, "if your opponent won't let you approach him? Suppose he sails better than you, and ha' got the weather *gage* o' you? and, moreover, prefers long bolls to close quarters—what'er you to do then—eh?"

"I say, Mister Burton," cried Crank, in an under tone, and casting his eye contemptuously towards the speaker, "who may that gentleman be? If he be the *master*, the discipline's damnably altered since my day."

"Perhaps th' alteration is a' the beeter for the sarvice,"

said the master, in a surly and sarcastic tone, which failed not to reach its intended object.

In his progress forward, Crank suddenly stopped to examine a novel apparatus, which had been recently affixed to the breech of one of the bow-chasers.*

"What have we here?" said he, pointing to an arched index, which gave the angular elevation or depression of the gun.

"That, Sir," said Hasty, "we term a quadrant."

"A quadrant!—a quadrant!" reiterated the veteran, with a hoarse laugh—"I say, Emily, my dear," drawing his niece, from metal more attractive, to inspect cold iron—"I say, you've often heard me talk of *shooting the sun*, hav'n't you? Well, see here," added he, placing himself in a ludicrous position, as he looked along the sight of the gun, "this is the way we do it *now*. Had you there, eh, Burton?—ha!—ha!—ha!"

Burton, who had been, hitherto, too warmly assailed by the artillery of the *eyes*, to be interested in any scientific discussion on the *sights* of cannon, drily exclaimed—

"Ah, Sir, this is but one of the many provident contrivances, lately invented, for rapidly replenishing the population of the other world."

"How do you mean, Sir?" sharply interrogated Crank.

"Why, Sir, to provide against the consequences of a too superabundant population, and co-operate in the benevolent projects of the Malthusian philosophy."

"*Malthusalem*? Damn it, man, he never was at sea—was he, sister?—you know best. If you go so far back, Burton, for a wrinkle, why not try old *Noah* on a wind? he was something of a tar, in his time—though I believe too, he never saw a shot fired in anger in his life. Eh, Mr. Senna?"

"Just so," briefly replied the compounder of drugs.

"But I see how it is," resumed the veteran, "I suppose, by-and-by, to cope with the Yankee cannibals, who, they tell me, have invented an engine for throwing scalding water on the decks of their victims, and boiling them

* The guns placed most forward, and those employed in a stern chase ; or when the fugitive is directly a-head.

alive ; we must help the vultures out with a volley of hot parsley-and-butter to make them relish their carrion."

The only reply to this partly angry, partly comic effusion, elicited from Burton, consisted in an unfinished quotation--

"When Greek meets Greek--"

"Greek, Sir," said Crank, interrupting the lieutenant in his quotation, "the whole business is *Hebrew* to me. Come," continued he, addressing Hasty, and turning away from the guns, "let's now look aloft."

Though as yet a silent looker-on in the rear, Tiller fully participated in the spirit of his master's remark. It was completely *tel maître tel valet*. Each thing derided by Crank, was held in contempt by Thomas ; who silently manifested his disapprobation of every novelty or invention by a scornful curl of the upper lip, accompanied by a dissenting shake of the head, as he squirted out, to the great annoyance of Hasty, his tobacco-juice on the snow-white deck.

Missing, in his minute examination of the rigging aloft, those small lines which were formerly used for keeping the foot of the top-sails clear of the top-rim, Crank, nudging Burton, pointed to his sister, and whispered--

"I say, it would be well if *some* here could remove the *'crow's-feet'* from the corner of their top-lights, as easily as Captain Staunch has taken *his* from his top-rims."

After again looking in the same direction aloft, he dropped his glass from his eye, and, in his surprise, caught suddenly his sister's arm. By the grasp (perfectly unintentional) of the old gentleman, her attention was arrested by that which was professionally meant only for the ear of the lieutenant, while he muttered in a tone of horror--

"See here ! they'll *strip* her next ! you scarcely treat that craft with common decency. What's become of the *mice* on her stays ?"

The singular associations awakened in her mind by this extraordinary allusion to animals, which were always objects of terror to her, excited afresh the nervous apprehensions of his sister. Aware, previously, of those practical

jokes, which Crank used humorously to assure her, were practised on the persons of the fair who ventured afloat, the intimation of *mice* on her stays, alarmed her beyond measure. In fact, no announcement of the most serious danger could have given her feelings a greater shock. She screamed aloud, jumped up and down in a perpendicular direction, all the while vehemently shaking her clothes, in the full persuasion that some mischievous urchin had had the rudeness to practise on her fears, and to thrust mice down her back between her gown and stays. It was with some difficulty, and not until she had afforded much amusement to the sailors, who are *amateurs* of every species of dancing, however singular, that she could be so far calmed, as to comprehend that the allusion was not meant to the obnoxious animals named, but to certain knots, worked on the collar of the lower and top-mast-stays.

Like many individuals, who torture their friends into an admiration of the domestic comforts they possess, as they drag the reluctant visitors through every corner of their ill-assorted houses; so, Hasty, imagining his were as much interested in his hobby as himself, proposed that the party should inspect minutely every crevice of the regions below.

To afford a full view of the 'tween-decks,' the tars were turned up, and though the lower deck was lighted expressly for the occasion, with candles, placed before burnished tin reflectors, still the vision could scarcely be said to be assisted in so sudden a transition from the broad glare of the sun, to the illuminated gloom beneath, crossed here and there by these concentrated rays of light.

Already Crank and Hasty had descended to the lower-deck, by the fore hatchway ladder; when Emily, at the expense of exhibiting to her devoted conductor a well-turned ancle, followed her mother and Senna in succession.

"How delightful!" exclaimed the veteran's niece, affecting admiration at the dazzling glare of the reflections below, which from the "darkness visible" around, might not have been inaptly compared to plating on a coffin.

"Oh, delightful indeed!" re-echoed Mrs. Crank, with a chuckle, and an elevation of her head which brought her occiput into awkward collision with the beams above.

"What a shockingly *low* ceiling!" exclaimed the injured fair one, in an altered tone—"I wonder how they breathe here!"

Determined as Emily was to achieve the heroine, both she and her mother seemed to tread this deck as if instinctively apprehensive that each foot would rouse the slumbering anger of a venomous reptile. Nor were the ladies alone taken aback. Had the quiet spirit of Benbow been disenthralled from the dominion of Pluto, and suffered to revisit the well economized and orderly haunts of the *Spitfire's* crew, his surprise would not have been greater than that which Crank testified, when his optic nerve was assailed by a *coup d'œil*, so unusual and appalling. Indeed, such was the effect the illumination had upon his heated imagination, that he was at first tempted to cry out, *fire*, or assume the command, and order the 'firemen' below to put it out. The dignity of the veteran, however, quickly reasserted itself, and he endeavoured to account for the involuntary surprise which had been excited, by exclaiming with a sneer—

"Hey-day. Mister First Lieutenant—things are come to a pretty pass in the service when *Jack's* birth is lit up like a ball-room. In my time a fellow was d——d glad to find the way to his mouth by the glimmer of a rope-yarn greased in pork slush."

Then stifling an oath, which he felt would be thrown away in a case so hopeless; and moderating, as he thought, the expression of his feelings within the line of dignified rebuke, he despondingly ejaculated—

"Well, well—it's no matter—I see how it is—the service is going headlong to the devil!"

The only individual among the seamen, who, during this inspection, had been permitted to remain on the 'tween-decks, was an elderly quarter-master, whose devotion to his studies, procured him this exclusive privilege. Though becoming a student late in life, he had discovered an extraordinary aptitude for the acquirement of languages orally; or, in other words, he could patter Dutch, Spanish, and Portuguese, with a fluency which made him pass on board for a perfect linguist. His prejudices against

the nation had stood in the way of his acquiring the French language; until a consciousness of its utility was awakened by frequent intercourse with the natives of the Islands of 'Houatt' and 'Hedie' in the Bay of Biscay, where our cruisers on that station, were in the habit of repairing to complete their water: and by the lieutenant's advice, he had, in an evil hour, determined to acquire the language grammatically.

"What are your studies, my man?" asked Crank, as he approached the linguist, who was sitting solitarily in his birth, as if plotting mischief or wooing the muses. "You seem rather busily occupied?"

"Busy, Sir!" said the bald-headed tar, rising from his seat, and removing the quid, on which he ruminated, from his mouth;—"I've been as busy as a bee in a tar-bucket the most o' the morn, trying to take the thoro-puts out of these here thundering French pronouns—but I believe I must give it up for a bad job; unless Mister Burton there, will lend me a fist to clear the kile."

Here Burton acquainted the veteran that his venerable *protégé* (for he was quarter-master of his watch) had, by his knowledge of their language, already succeeded in facilitating the capture of some Dutch and Spanish vessels. His zeal for the service had inspired him with a desire to qualify as decoy on the French coast; and added, that his want of acquaintance with the language, was the only impediment which stood in its way; as he was an absolute *Proteus* in adopting the disguise, (as far as respected externals,) of every sea-faring nation, whether friend or foe.

Despite of Crank's cynical remarks, the births or mess-places, were really tastefully fitted up. Their tables were scoured perfectly white, and on the top of each stood a grog-kid, or small tub, with its handle and hoops brightly burnished.

"For what purpose are these?" asked Emily, pointing to the tubs.

"Those, my dear?—those are milk-pails," drily answered Crank—"For, I suppose," continued he, turning to Burton, "Jack now takes cream with his tea"—a sally which convulsed poor Tiller with a loud roar of laughter, and drenched his only eye with a salt effusion of delight.

Proceeding aft to the marines' births, the ladies' sensibilities were doomed again to be shocked, by the loud and petulant inquiry of the veteran on perceiving a line of huge boxes, drawn up on either side of the mess-tables.

"Holloa!—holloa!—What have we here?—Are these arm chests?"

"No," replied Hasty, with a smile; "these are the *midshipmen's* chests."

"*Midshipmen's* chests?—midshipmen's fiddlesticks," cried Crank, his eyes flashing with indignation. "Why, damn it, Sir, each is as big as a jolly-boat—I know when I was a young *gentleman*, I thought myself in high luck to get hold of a purser's candle-box to pack up my traps. But I see how it is," said he, shaking his head, and leaving his usual doleful prediction unfinished.

Contrasted with the dark, dirty holes, enclosed with greasy hanging screens, in which young gentlemen of Crank's day were doomed to domicile; the 'midshipman's birth' of the Spitfire, presented an orderly and cleanly appearance. A rich mounted glass lamp, suspended from the beams, gave light to the cabin. The panels of the bulkheads were tastefully ornamented with stars, composed of dirks, swords crossed, and other weapons of war. No doctor's 'medicine chest,' covered with a dirty hammock, or piece of greasy canvass, was suffered to usurp the name or offices of a mess-table. Here, to Crank's surprise, were seen no broken tea-cups strewed about; no cracked mustard-pots, black Jacks, or battered tin tureens; which last in *his* day, encumbered the table at all hours, and served, as occasion required, the double purpose of containing grog or 'serving out soup.' All appeared clean, and arranged with a due regard to neatness and comfort. A good oak table, covered with a green cloth, occupied the centre of the birth, on which lay a few well bound books, whose titles reflected credit on the selectors.

Having now completed their inspection, the party appeared on deck, preparatory to leaving the ship. Pending the operation of 'hauling up,' and 'manning' the veteran's boat, Crank had drawn the captain aside to the taffrail, where he detained and held him firmly with his left arm; while, from the vehemence of his manner and the sway of

his right, which resembled that of a boatswain's mate in the act of flogging an offender, it struck Burton, that the old gentleman was occupied in the very difficult task of convincing this stubborn apostle of the new school, that his system was erroneous; his regulations imperfect; and his notions of discipline far too lenient for the service.--The blood at length rose in the old gentleman's face; his eyes shot fire; with his right hand raised aloft in air, and standing on tiptoe, through intense energy, he appeared to be concluding his arguments, as clearly as action could convey his sentiments, (for no sound reached Burton's ear;) with an assurance, that nothing short of giving half the crew 'three dozen' a piece, every morning before breakfast, deserve it or not, could ensure good discipline on board a king's ship, or render his authority respected. The good humoured commander, now released from his grasp, laughed heartily, while he shook Crank very cordially by the hand, as if to atone for his obstinacy in error; and the old gentleman hurried to rejoin his party (who were by this time all embarked), and departed in a state of excitement impossible to be conceived.

CHAPTER XIV.

FATAL FESTIVITIES.

*The world is full of strange vicissitudes,
And here was one exceedingly unpleasant.*
BYRON.

IN the evening of the subsequent day the repose of the cottage was invaded by the appearance of an unexpected guest. Whether it was to be attributed to the increased attention paid by the surgeon of the ship to his patient, at his earnest request; and the more frequent application of a potent embrocation; or to causes purely natural and unconnected with medical skill, certain it is that Captain Staunch had so rapidly, since Emily's visit afloat, recovered

from the effects of his late accident, that he was enabled, after cautiously abstaining from any unnecessary exercise of the limb for near thirty hours, to draw his Spanish leather boots once more on both legs, and direct the gig to be manned to put him on shore, for the first time since his arrival in harbour. A very short time elapsed before he presented himself to the family at Camperdown Cottage, where he was received with unaffected cordiality by Crank, who, in the true spirit of old fashioned, or what the *haut ton* would call plebeian hospitality, produced his best bottle as a proof of the sincerity of his welcome.

It must not be presumed this was a visit of mere ceremony. Already preparations had been commenced by Captain Staunch to fulfil his pledge to Emily; as to the marine ball; and before a second glass had been despatched, the captain made a tender of his credentials to the ladies in the form of cards of invitation to each, together with a number of others in blank; which he requested they would fill up with the names of such friends as they would have invited, had the merry meeting been at their own house. By a singular coincidence, which did not escape the notice of Emily, the disproportion between the number of cards requesting the honour of *her* company, and those soliciting the honour of *his* company, were pretty nearly, as Mrs. Crank '*blueishly*' observed, in the ratio of the greater number of females born to that of males, according to the opinion prevalent among modern philosophers.

The captain apologized for the disparity, on the plea that all his officers and young gentlemen would, but for this precaution, be perhaps condemned to the fate of Tantalus, should the ladies by accident prefer their own neighbours as partners.

Emily presumed to hint, that as the ladies of her acquaintance were, for rural nymphs, sufficient judges of etiquette to know that such a neglect would appear both ungracious and ungrateful, there was every probability that his suspicions were unfounded.

While the captain endeavoured to interest the ladies in the fate of his young friends on board, so that they might not be disappointed of partners, Crank seemed

lost in thought ; but, in a minute after, brightened up, and roared aloud with delight—

“ Let me alone—I have it—I have it—no danger, but the craft shall be mann’d.”

“ Mann’d !” said Emily, “ the difficulty seems to be quite the other way, uncle.”

“ Difficulty, my dear,” said he, “ none in the world. —Mann’d she *shall* be—for sooner than there should be a want of hands, I’ll make one of the *gang* to board Miss Monitor’s seminary, and press all the able-bodied school-girls into the service.”

At this unexpected sally on the part of the veteran, who had never previously been suspected of any daring acts of gallantry, except in the face of the enemy, the whole party joined in laughter.

Emily assured her uncle, that she would use all her influence with her friends to prevent the necessity of proceeding to such alarming extremities ; while the captain was too strict a disciplinarian not to remind the old gentleman that an Admiralty warrant, backed by the mayor of the port, would be necessary to authorize so hot a press on that station.

The time was agreeably spent in *badinage* of this sort, until tea was announced. The matron’s manner towards Staunch during the evening, sufficiently proved that it was only necessary he should oftener avail himself of the hospitality of Camperdown Cottage to establish himself, with at least one individual of the family, a decided favourite. Emily displayed her obedience to her mother’s commands, and the captain’s wishes, by performing a *concerto* on the piano, with so much spirit and execution, that while he complimented her on her acquirement, he could not refrain from expressing his surprise that his lieutenant had never apprized him of her musical talents. Any old woman could have explained the reason of Burton’s silence. But his captain was, in the best acceptation of the term, a real sailor, and not formed of that stuff which gratuitously engenders suspicion.

After once more recommending the case of his officers to Emily’s and her mother’s commiseration, to avoid the dread alternative proposed by her uncle, but which, he

observed, could not, with classical propriety, occur on board any ship in the service except the *Sabine*; he left the commodore, who was too proud to ask an explanation of a junior, deeply perplexed in attempting to solve this mysterious hint, as to the guilty history of a crack ship in his majesty's service.

'The early village cock had twice done salutation to the morn,' which was to consummate the fond anticipations of amusement already formed by the fashionables at *Dartmouth*, when the old captain's bell rang a corresponding alarm on the drowsy ear of his poor factotum. Tiller was as busy as an unconscious being could be, in recruiting nature, and repairing the consequences of last night's indulgence in good cheer, by a long nap; and if it be fair to argue from his total indifference to his own loud snoring, would have continued whelmed in deep and drowsy sleep, if even summoned by the boatswain's shrill whistle, or the yet louder alarm of a thirty-two pound carronade fired on the same deck: had he not been roused to duty by the insinuation of the elbow of his old rib among those of his left side. In evident ill-humour, he growled out—

"Avast there, Misses—what's in the wind now, Bef?"

Being made acquainted with the fact that his master's bell had twice rung, he rose slowly, rubbed the rheum out of his solitary eye, and huddling on some of his clothes, repaired to his master's bed-side.

"This is—sad—sad work—Thomas!" said the veteran, pumping out his words under a paroxysm of pain, as Tiller approached the clews of his cot—for Crank would have considered it an indignity to have been stowed away in a lubberly four-post bed. "I'm sadly—sadly afraid—oh!—bless me! What a twitch that was—" groaned the old gentleman—"I believe I did—did take a little too much—" exercise, he would have said, but his words were cut short by a groan; and Tiller was allowed the privilege of mentally concluding it, as he thought most consonant to truth; muttering, in an under tone, aside—

"I know if *you* didn't, somebody else did."

"No, no, Thomas," continued the afflicted patient,—
 "I'm not quite in trim—in trim for this trip afloat—I fear
 —fear they 'll have a wet day of it."

"I don't know, Sir—it 's dry enough now—though, I
 believe, some on 'em had a precious *wet* night of it."

"Well, so I thought, for I can't tell how else to ac-
 count for this infernal attack—curse it, I don't know—
 which aches most—my head or my feet. I suppose,
 Thomas, the glass is rather—rather low this morning?"

"Low, Sir!" said Tiller, shaking his head, perfectly
 unconscious that Crank was alluding to the state of the
 barometer, which had been lately presented to his mas-
 ter by Burton—"I know it's *lower* nor it *ought* to be—I
 doesn't like never to lay it to no one—'kase I never
 seed the old woman the worse for licker in my life—
 but——"

"But what?—Where the devil are you flying to
 now?" interrupted the invalid—"why, man, it's the
weather-glass I mean."

"Oh! I axes your pardon, Sir; I thought 'twas con-
 garning the bottle o' rum that was missing last night at
 supper."

"D——n the rum—I want to know how the weather
 is. Is the wind in a dry quarter?"

"Wind?—bless your heart, Sir, there's not a breath—
 it 's up-and-down, like a dog's fore-leg."

"Well, but how does the day look?"

"Lord, Sir—it 's just like a morn up the Straits—the
 dew on the grass glitters, for all the world, like the gold
 lace on your honour's roast-beef coat."

"Ah, Thomas!" said Crank, heaving a heavy sigh,
 "that's always the way with me—when there's any thing
 pleasant going on, I 'm always *in* for it. D——n it, on
 the 12th of April,* I was the first fellow to get this in-
 fernal gash in the cheek. But never mind, Thomas—
 we must take things as they are. If it comes to the
 worst—you shall take—take charge of the women
 afloat;" for Crank disdained the idea of allowing any
 other boat than his own to convey his family on board.

* Rodney's action.

"But mind," continued he, "don't—don't let the tiller out o' your hand—dangerous to trust it to a woman, in a tide's-way:—and, observe—be particular, and point out every thing afloat, they don't understand,—just in the same way I would myself."

"No fear, Sir,—I'll make it as pleasant to the ladies, as if you were there yourself. But, I hope, Sir, you'll be another man after breakfast."

"No, no, Thomas: I sadly fear I'm in for a week's spell of it—however—give me my traps, and help me to rig—I'll make for the sitting-room, before I get worse—for if I must be on my beam-ends—I may as well be hove down in one place as another."

Tiller had already assisted his crippled master to his usual station at his favourite window, which might be very properly called his observatory, where he received copious directions from Crank, "to have the yawl in crack order; the cushions of the seats, beat and brushed, and the crew cleanly shaved and rigged, ready to muster by seven bells; as he intended to overhaul all hands, men and women, before they embarked."

Meanwhile, preparations had been making on board, for "rigging out the ball-room." Ere dawn of day, parties were despatched on shore to procure laurels and evergreens of every description; and despite of strict injunctions to the contrary, many depredations were committed by these marine marauders, among the neighbouring shrubberies.

The decks underwent an extraordinary cleaning and grinding, and even water had been heated in the coppers for the occasion. The capstan, like other useless logs, was "unshipped," turned off the quarter deck, and placed before the mast. Every officer in the ship was busy; and, indeed, far too busy, for Hasty's peace of mind, in directing the decorations and devising suitable emblems, to be chalked upon the deck—nor was the subject unattended with dispute. The master proposed a dragon, spitting fire through a speaking trumpet, as emblematic of the ship's name. Hasty thought it a privateer-like idea, and that on board a king's ship, nothing could look possibly better than the Crown and Anchor.

The purser agreed (as he always did, right or wrong) with the first lieutenant, and thanked his stars " 't was a day-light dance; adding, with the air of a man who thought he was saying a good thing, " If the lady patroness be the *saint* they say, and as fond of a blaze about her, as those of the Romish persuasion, by George, she 'd break me in *candles*."

Burton, who had undertaken the part of draughtsman and designer-general, was alone silent; and heedless of his brother officers' incoherent observations, proceeded in his task, and completed, in different coloured chalks, various classic, and happily conceived devices, on different parts of the deck. In order to make room upon deck, the carronades were run close out to the ship's side, while their slides were turned fore-and-aft, on each of which was placed a " spare purser's bed," neatly concealed by a buntin flag; thus converting the cumbrous bed of this rude-throated engine of war, to the purposes of voluptuous repose or tender dalliance.

The awning overhead, was so disposed as to assume the form of a handsome canopy, and was splendidly decorated with the Spanish ensign, on the yellow ground of which, a rampant scarlet lion, flanked on either side by tall castles, formed the emblazonry of proud Castilian monarchs.

Spare sails attached to the outer extremities of the awning overhead, and laced tightly below, served to screen in the shrouds. These substitutes for decorated walls, were tastefully hung round with many-coloured flags, and relieved by festoons of flowers and sprigs of laurel. Like a large prop or pillar, supporting the ceiling, the main-mast, from the awning down to the deck, was dressed in evergreens, interspersed with red and white roses: the whole scene presenting a most picturesque *coup d'œil*.

It was now seven bells, that is to say, half-past eleven in the morning, when, according to Crank's directions, Tiller exhibited the boat's crew, (who, by-the-by, were all fishermen of the place) clad in blue jackets, white trowsers, and red waistcoats.* After a close inspection,

* The venerable chief magistrate of Westminster, appears, in selecting

and a lecture from their master to abstain from spirits, the boatmen were dismissed, and desired to await the arrival of Tiller and the ladies on the beach.

Crank, who knew as well as most people, the value of tide, if not of time, now became excessively fidgetty and impatient, at, as he thought, the unnecessary delay of the ladies at their *toilette*. Nor did his impatience altogether proceed from caprice. He knew his sister was deputed to act as lady patroness, afloat, and therefore was anxious she should be on board in time to prepare for the reception of her female friends. He had already, in vain, implored her to hurry; when at last perceiving that the tide had turned, and likely to make strongly against the ladies, before their *toilette* was completed, he rang his bell in a rage, and desired the servant who answered it, to give his "compliments to the ladies, and tell them that if they didn't bear-a-hand, and rig, he should despatch Tiller on board, to decline the party altogether, particularly as he was himself so great an invalid."

This peremptory message had the desired effect. Emily aware of her uncle's capriciousness, particularly when suffering from gout, now hastened to the drawing-room.

"Come!" said Crank, as she entered the room all *gaieté de cœur*—"where's your mother? Why I'd heave a three-decker down in one half the time you've taken to rig."

Mrs. Crank now followed her daughter.

"Oh, there you are—are you? Well, I knew how it would be—knew you'd dawdle away your time till you'd lose your tide? However, let's see how you turn out—come, toe-a-line the pair o' you—for I mean to have a reg'lar overhaul o' your rigging before you start tack or sheet."

To keep the old gentleman in good humour, particularly as he appeared now to have a little respite of pain, Emily motioned to her mother to obey orders; when, both

the costume of his crew, or, as they are termed by the "*Fancy*," the "*Robbing Redbreasts*," to have adopted the partialities of the old school of seamen, whose ships' companies, on all occasions were, with the exception of the swallow tails, accoutred like these blue-birds of passage of the present day:

advancing together in front of our arbiter of taste, and Emily disengaged from her shoulders a long silk lavender coloured scarf, Crank exclaimed—

“ ‘Pon my word, Miss Emily, you ’re braced up sharp enough for a chase on a wind—why, child, you ’ve a waist like a wasp—but I suppose you intend leaving your *sting* behind.—Had you there, eh? Come, come,” continued he, as he looked down at her feet—“ you must really shake another reef out—you show too much daylight under the foot o’ your foresail.”

Possibly Emily might have profitted by her uncle’s advice, but she was a girl far too well satisfied with her own taste, ever to be, in any way, guided by his.

We have already said she was ambitious; and this feeling is never more legitimately displayed in a female, than when it exhausts its, often dangerous, excitement in an innocent desire to excel others in the suitableness of attire—so far the mode prevailed with her. Perhaps her anxiety for display went a little farther—though she was not, certainly, one of those enthusiasts in the worship of the fickle goddess, Fashion; who, in their eagerness to appear in the height of the mode, do not hesitate to adopt the most culpable, and sometimes ludicrous excesses; so that, if long waists are revived, they are sure to out-waist the young ladies in the days of good Queen Bess; or, if the nether garments of the sex be “curtailed of their fair proportions,” they are almost sure to rival the Bavarian brevity of Liston’s petticoats in his broom girl’s dress. Of none of these enormities, or monstrosities, was she guilty; yet still she knew few had a handsomer foot and ankle; and it is not, therefore, to be wondered at, that she was determind they should be seen.

The matron was the next to pass muster.

“Come, old lady,” said Crank, “heave about till I take a-stern view of you.”

No sooner had his sister turned round, than Crank, winking at his niece, jocosely observed,

“Some of us loom very large abaft—one would think we were going on a smuggling trip. I know, for *my* part, I shouldn’t like to venture near a man-o’-war carrying a false——” Here he stopped short. “But never mind,”

he continued, "if the master a't'arms doesn't make a search for spirits—there 's no snakes in Virginia."

The indignant matron now bristled up, and observed, that "If she was the subject of any vulgar allusion, it was luckily lost upon her—for that she could never comprehend his vile technicalities. Indeed," added she, "from the manner in which we have been so rudely hurried to embark, I could not have imagined there could have been any time spared for such silly banter."

"Time!" said the veteran; "there 's time now for any thing, since you 've lost your tide—and, moreover, there 's time, too, for closer inspection—for, unless my eyes deceive me very much indeed, you sport an extraordinary flush in your face."

"Are we going on board, or *not*, Captain Crank?" said the matron, indignantly; at the same time endeavouring to blink her brother's insinuation. "Because, if we be, it is full time to send to Mister Senna."

"Mister Senna! Mister Senna 's not going with you at all—if I can't go, nobody, I promise you, shall occupy my place in the stern sheets. Thomas will take good care of you, and he 's already received his instructions. But, I say," added he, in a jocular tone—"tell me candidly, before you start—hav'n't you?—now, I don't want to make you blush deeper—hav'n't you had!—you know what I mean—had—recourse to—recourse to *slap** on your cheek."

"A slap on my cheek!—why, what put *that* in your head?" asked the matron, with a sneer.

"Well, to be more explicit, hav'n't you been tickling your face with the hare's foot?"

"Really, I don't comprehend you."

"Well, then, since you are determined not to understand either 'oblique,' or 'traverse sailing,'—in plain, downright English, hav'n't you been daubing your face with rouge?"

"Upon my word, Mister Crank, or Commodore, as fools say, to please you," said the pious matron, ruffled

* This is a provincial term, confined to the localities of Sallyport, Gosport, and Dock.

that either her precepts or practices should be suspected, "your remarks, Sir—and before your niece, too—are insufferably gross."

Thinking matters were going a little too far, Emily interposed, and said, "Really, uncle, I thought mamma never looked better; and if she has put on a *little rouge*, I'm sure it's very becoming. Now come, uncle, *sans badinage*—in your heart, don't you think so yourself?"

"I'll tell you what I think in my heart—I think far worse of a woman that plasters her face with paint, than I do of a pirate: for if one captures you under false colours, he does it at the risk of his life; he knows he'll be hanged if he's taken: while the other, who entraps a poor fellow with dirty brick dust, not only escapes unpunished, but claps the noose on the neck of the innocent party. And now that I've told what I *think*, shall I tell you what I *know*?"

"What, Sir?" asked Emily.

"Why, that hypocrisy isn't easier discovered than paint!"*

The detection of this attempt to heighten the personal attractions, excited naturally enough, in a woman who piqued herself on the superior purity of her motives, her strongest displeasure; but that the opportunity should be embraced in order to connect this comparatively venial offence with the foul charge of hypocrisy, was too much for the patience of the party assailed. The fire flashed from her keen, expressive eyes, and the blood, which mounted to her cheeks and forehead, soon attested the truth of the insinuation, by the strong contrast exhibited between the natural and acquired complexion.

The sudden appearance of Senna, who was now observed approaching the cottage in haste, seemed, as it were, to act like one of his own *sedatives*, in appeasing the angry feelings of the irritated matron. The moment she perceived him, she was about to leave the room, when Crank, anticipating her object, good humouredly recalled her, and said,

* A witty French author defines paint, as a "composition which has the property of making old women a little more ugly, and young women a little less handsome."

"See here, sister : upon second thoughts, as the doctor would only be dosing me to death, and as you would undoubtedly die were he left behind, I think you may take him in tow after all. But, mind this ! Thomas has charge o' the boat."

No sooner had Senna entered the room, than he expressed his *regret* for his patient's attack. He approached him with professional concern in his face, and proposed to repeat his favourite recipe ; but Crank declined his advice, observing, that "he had no desire to be dosing while the doctor was dancing : all I want," said he, "is now to be left alone, and see you all fairly under weigh."

In obedience to this insinuation, the party had left the room to proceed to the beach, when a loud hail from the veteran 'brought Tiller to,' and back to his master.

"Thomas," said he, as his servant approached him, "don't forget what I told you in the morning : and, above all things, mind, that you, and *you* alone, have charge o' the boat ; and here—before you go, just bend on a leading line from my chair to the bell-rope ; for, you see, in this position, I shall never be able to reach it ; and I feel as if it would now require a good gun-tackle purchase to raise me on my pins."

Thomas had not long left his master, with the comfortable assurance that he would strictly comply with his orders, ere the boat was observed shoving off from the shore. As Crank had foreseen it, the tide was now making strongly against them : and, indeed, as if decreed by the Fates, it became manifest to the party, that they were doomed for 'a long pull—a strong pull'—though perhaps not 'a pull altogether.'

The system of Pythagoras enjoined, as a probation to those starting for the philosophic goal, a silence of seven years. The hint was too good to be lost on the family of Mister *Bull*, who all seem Pythagoreans by birth, and whether in a coffee-house, or a stage-coach, a probationary taciturnity is imposed, as both comfortable and pleasant. If the journey be long, he preserves, for the first four hours, a sullen silence—some have been known to have a predilection for a still longer period of taciturnity. On

all hands, it would appear that a somewhat similar estimate should be made of the spirit of social independence which ought to characterize every English *compagnon de voyage* : or, to be more blunt, that it is symptomatic of liberty and free-born Bullish demeanour, that companions on a journey should hold no intercourse ; until they have entirely exhausted the science of conjecture, in developing, from their motionless features, the profession, wealth, or consequence, of each mute fellow traveller.

Though their motives, as well as the element on which they moved, were perfectly dissimilar, yet it would appear that Mrs. Crank's party had acted strictly in accordance with this principle, during the tedious half hour which had already elapsed since embarking in the boat.

The reader of romance may imagine that the stillness of the scene had thrown the rein on the neck of contemplation ; or that the varied and 'thick coming fancies' of the mind, flowed in corresponding exuberance with the waters of the silent and rapid tide with which the boat's crew contended. But no, reflections are oftener suggested by the common-place incidents of life than by romance, however highly wrought. The unlucky allusion of her brother to her toilette and principles, before setting out, still furnished the matron with abundant, though far from palatable food for reflection. Emily was immersed in anticipations of display ; and as for the doctor, from the lowering gravity of his deportment, it might have been suspected he was, or affected to be, absorbed, as a certain barrister of the Emerald Isle would say, in a syllogistic series of scientific solutions.

Although, to avoid contending with the stream, Tiller had kept the boat close along the border of the shore, yet such was the strength of the tide, that the crew had experienced a tiresome tug on their oars, ere he could venture to shape a course in a lateral or 'lasking' direction ahead of the ship.

Emily, who had been eagerly watching the progress of the boat, since Tiller had altered her course, was now the first to break silence. "Oh, my!" said she, suddenly darting her bright beaming eyes on the surface of the flowing tide. "What's that black looking thing on the water?"

"That there, Miss?" said Tiller, pointing to the object; "that's a nun-buoy, Miss."

"A *nun-boy*!" exclaimed Emily, somewhat startled, at an appellative which awakened a train of thought in her mind, that might perhaps have furnished a whole chapter to Hobbes, or Locke himself, as to the strangeness of this association of ideas.

"You see, Ma'am," said Thomas, touching the matron on the shoulder, as soon as he had perceived she had turned her head from the object which had so suddenly attracted her daughter's attention.—"You see, Ma'am, *he* doesn't want tapping; he watches like a dog."

"*We* know—we know," testily interrupted Mrs. Crank—"we don't want any farther information on the subject. —But, indeed," added she, interpreting Tiller's phraseology into a less equivocal sense, as she mistook the word 'watches' for *washes*,—"you 're just like your master, always more communicative on *these* sort of subjects, than anxious to listen to those which might tend to enlighten your besotted mind, and lead you from that dangerous darkness, under which you so unfortunately labour."

"Hurrah in the bow—Well, Ma'am, you know a man can't help his misfortunes. Give way, Bob—But I dare say *light* or dark," muttered Thomas, not a little ruffled at an allusion he considered personally directed at his ocular defect—"light or dark, I can see as much with my single top-light, as you can with your two barnacles* to boot—strike-out together, boys."

With difficulty Emily could suppress her laughter at Tiller's ludicrous perversion of her mother's text, when the latter exclaimed—

"Ah, like master, like man!"

"Why, yes, Ma'am—I likes to do every thing like the captain, and partickler when he tells me to do so *himself*. —What were his first orders this morning? 'Mind, Thomas,' says he,—God help the poor man in the midst of all his pain!—aye, when his toes were tortering him worse nor the nip of a Port Royal land crab—'Mind, Tom,' says he,—Thomas I mean—'Mind,' says he, 'and pint out every thing to the ladies afloat, just in the same sort o' way as I would myself.'"

* Spectacles.

"Well, I'm sure, after all, mamma, it was very considerate of uncle, indeed."

"To be sure it was, Miss,—and where's t'other 'sides himself would have thought o' the same?"

"'Pon my word," said the matron, "you're very loquacious, Mister Thomas!"

"Ma'am?"—returned Tiller, unconscious of her meaning.

"I say you are a great deal too talkative for your station."

"Station, Ma'am?" growled the one-eyed tar, stung afresh by a rebuke which he was convinced was unmerited.

"—I believe a man's never *more* in his station nor when he obeys orders. Nor should I be doing my duty, if I didn't explain, and moreover, in a plain sailing way, every question I'm axed."

"Just so," said Senna, who had been hitherto silent; "but it seems the ladies can dispense with your plain sailing ways."

"I've charge o' the boat, Sir," said Tiller, thinking to silence the doctor.

"Well, we know all *that* already," snappishly observed Mrs. Crank.

"Well, then, Ma'am, when Miss Emily axes me, what's that black-looking thing on the water, would it be right in me to say, it was the snout of a whale, when I knew to the contrary—and when I knows there's no one better when the captain's not by, nor myself, to pint out the nature o' the thing in its nat'ral state."

"I really fear the *fellow* has been drinking," whispered Mrs. Crank to the doctor, "but indeed I'll not suffer it;" then, turning to Tiller, she exclaimed, in an authoritative tone, "I desire you to desist, Sir—I don't at all understand your indulging in that sort of language!"

"Why, what sort o' language would you have, Ma'am?—I wish the captain was here—but it seems just the same way with some ladies as *some* lubbers," said Thomas, glancing a significant look at the doctor,—“they never *will* learn what they ought—then, if a body takes the trouble to tell 'em the difference 'twixt a brace and a bowlin, or a sheep-shank from a shank-painter, or the likes of that

ere,—all the thanks you get in return is, ‘what sort o’ language is that?’ ”

“Well, I must say,” said Emily, laughing, “Thomas has always evinced a ready disposition to set us right on professional subjects.”

“I hope, Miss, you don’t call *these* professional subjects,” said her mother, assuming a moralizing air.

“Look here, Miss, you are a young lady o’ sense—it’s no use talking to people as are determined to never learn nothing.—That there buoy, you see, Miss,” said Tiller, again pointing to the object on the water—“serves as a sort o’ *watch*, on the likes of such craft as *she*, as soon as reg’larly brought up.”

Though Tiller, in his own mind, had alluded to the *Spitfire*, in the application of the pronoun personal, yet it was not so apparent to the ladies to whom it was applied.

“Watch *what*?” asked Emily.

“Hold your tongue, child,” testily exclaimed Mrs. Crank.

“Why, you see, Miss,” resumed he, regardless of the matron’s monition—“he prevents the craft getting foul o’ one another—having a bad birth, and the likes o’ such awkward and lubberly tricks.”

“I declare the man’s a perfect monster. I desire, Sir,” said the matron, addressing Tiller in an angry and agitated tone, “that you instantly desist, and turn back for the beach. Do you suppose that I can tolerate such talk—such wickedness on the water? And as for you, Miss—you ought to be ashamed of yourself. But, indeed, you’re the captain’s adopted.”

“Lord, ma!—what’s the matter?” exclaimed Emily.—“Surely *I*’ve done nothing to offend you; and, I declare, I think Thomas is one of the last men in the world that would say an uncivil thing to any one.”

“That’s *you*, Miss,” said Tiller. “Hurrah, boys, we *gain* on her now. A chip of the old block,” muttered Thomas, aside.

“I fear,” said Senna, “as they say in the field, that we’ve been all on the wrong scent.”

With this observation the dialogue closed. Whether it was that Mrs. Crank considered it indecorous, or beneath

her dignity to dispute longer with a menial (for she was at all times rather distant with Tiller), or that the name of the ship suggested to Thomas the impolicy of keeping up a war of words with a woman on the water, we cannot stop to determine, but, certes, a cessation of tongues for some minutes ensued.

The boat now reached within hail of the ship. Perceiving that Tiller was not steering for the side on which, for the occasion, an accommodation ladder had been expressly fitted, the sentinel on the forecastle directed the coxswain to pull round on the opposite side. As the tide was running with the greatest rapidity, and the boat's crew were not a little oppressed from the heat of the weather; Tiller, unwilling to give up any vantage ground, by going under the stern of the ship, rashly attempted to cross her ahead. The ship's head was now on the left, and, unfortunately, the blind side of Tiller, and which rendered him unconscious how fast he was nearing her bows as he attempted to cross her hawse. He was in the critical moment of rounding the head of the vessel, when the sternmost rower on the larboard side "caught," as it is technically termed, "a crab," or, in other words, was unable to extricate his oar from the water in time with the rest of the crew. This accident had, not only the effect of counteracting the momentum of the boat, but of throwing the other rowers (who, as we before said, were fishermen, and not men-of-war's-men) into such a state of confusion in the boat, that, coming broadside on with the tide, and her keel being caught by the cable, she was instantly upset, and swept clean under the bows. An alarm was instantly given by the sentinel on the forecastle.

With the exception of the alarm of fire, there is no cry, perhaps, which excites a more general sympathy and activity, than that of "a man overboard."* The over-eager desire to render assistance, in such instances, frequently defeats itself, and endangers the life which it was intended to preserve. The forecastle was instantly crowded with swarms of men, who were destined to be mere spectators

* Naval anomaly—man or woman all the same. The urgency of the danger admits no designation of sex.

of a catastrophe they could not alleviate. The ball room preparations occupied so much of the ship, that they were all huddled together *en masse*; and so much attention had been paid to the neatness of her appearance, that scarcely a rope was left upon deck to heave overboard. The alarm of all was the greater, from discovering, for the first time, that not a single boat* had been left with the ship—having been all despatched for the expected visitors.

Burton was among the first to jump in the fore-chains. Paralyzed with horror, he beheld a sight which never fails to appeal with electric effect to the sympathy and courage of a young man—a lovely female perishing. But what was his horror, when he perceived that female was—his own Emily; who, supported for a moment by the buoyancy of her clothes, was fast whelming in the waves, and borne along in the tide with fearful rapidity.

With that presence of mind peculiar to him he rushed out of the chains—seized a grating—flung off his coat and shoes, and, full dressed as he was, precipitated both grating and himself over the side; and was barely in time to catch at her long dishevelled locks, which alone were now visible on the surface of the water, and save her from sinking to rise no more.

Not Venus herself, when she enveloped the beauteous Trojan boy in a cloud, and snatched him from the fury of the Greck:—not Eneas, as he bore aloft in his vigorous arms, from the flaming ruins of Troy, the aged form of his helpless parent, could have felt half the agonized ecstasy which bewildered Burton's senses as he pressed the dying girl to his heart, and buffeted his way to the grating, with the only arm now disengaged for the safety of both, amid the enthusiastic and encouraging shouts of the admiring crew. Courage is ever contagious:—already a young midshipman had plunged overboard, bearing in his teeth a long tow-line to their assistance. In this expedition he was doomed to be deceived, as the line, though veered out rapidly by a seaman in the chains, in sinking formed a tight, or semicircular bend, which was borne by the tide

* This practice, we are sorry to say, has been too often encouraged in vessels of war. In Benbow's time it was considered a punishable offence.

in an oblique direction to his course, neutralizing all his efforts to attain his object.

All the efforts of love and gallantry, however, must have proved ineffectual, had not one of the boats despatched ashore now appeared within hail. The loud order of the captain, delivered through a speaking trumpet, and the hoarse roar of the boatswain, who needed none, soon announced to the gay votaries of pleasure in the cutter, the nature of the disaster. As the men now strained every nerve, and bent their broad shoulders to the oars, with redoubled effort, to reach the drowning persons, a feeling of alarm became general among the ladies and gentlemen in the boat; not unmingled with terror, lest their humane interference might involve themselves in the fate of the sufferers, by their own upsetting. Mingled ejaculations of fear and anxiety burst from every side.—“How dreadful!” —“Nothing can save them!” —“What a noble fellow!” —“Give way there, my hearties,” cried the coxswain, pointing to the grating.

“Mind, Mister Sailor,” said a gentle dandy, “how you try to save them—think, for mercy’s sake, of our own safety:” while a female, clasping her hands, exclaimed—“Gracious God! we shall all be drowned!” But the most singular feeling betrayed; if feeling it can be called, which consists in its total absence; was that of some of the young ladies, who solely solicitous to preserve their handsome dancing dresses, began to tuck up their feet to the bottom on the seats on which they sat, faintly screaming—“Bless us, how very disagreeable!” “We shall all be *wet*!” “How very unfortunate!” “I hope it won’t interfere with the ball!”

These and many similar amiable insinuations of sympathy, or rather unconcern, for the fate of the young persons now fast hurrying to an early grave, produced no other effect on the tars, than to make them turn the quid in their mouths, accompanied with some very wry faces, and a shrug of the shoulder, which spoke, as intelligibly as silence ever spoke, a perfect contempt for fashionable feelings.

The boat soon neared the grating, on which poor Emily was sustained, though lifeless, by her fond but despairing admirer. Into this they were quickly hoisted in the arms of the sailors. The young midshipman was soon after

picked up, who, out of consideration for the comfort of the young ladies, resolutely insisted on not getting into the boat; observing, "that as he had already been well drenched, he would prefer holding on astern, and being towed on board the brig." In a few minutes, the whole party were brought alongside the accommodation-ladder, and put on board. Faint and breathless as he was, Burton resigned his lovely burthen to no other arms; but bore her singly, her head drooping over his shoulder, with zealous and anxious attention, and in a state of excitement, impossible to be conceived, to the captain's cabin; where the surgeon of the ship united with him in every possible exertion for her restoration.

The humanity of the reader may have been shocked by the apparent neglect of Emily's fellow-sufferers. They are not, like us, aware that she was the only person of the party in imminent danger. By singular good fortune, the portly persons of Mrs. Crank and the doctor, had perched a cross hawse, clinging by the cable; and the boat's-crew, with the innocent author of the disaster, like expert tacticians, swam for the gas-swamp boom, from whence they were speedily picked up.

It would be an injustice to the gallantry of the boatswain, not to mention, that he was the first to descend the bows, with a running-bow-line-knot in his hand, in order to secure the persons of the affrighted (and, had we any antipathy to bald heads, we might have added frightful) pair from their perilous plight: for it would appear, that on being thrown out of the boat, both were pitched, head foremost on the cable, the one losing his "scalp," and the other her neat, nut-brown coloured "toque." Indeed, it was afterwards asserted by many of the *Spitfire's* crew, that amid the resounding screams, and imploring ejaculations for personal aid, and, particularly, pending the most alarming period of Emily's danger, that it was a difficult matter to pronounce, which cry prevailed most, that of "save my child," or "save my wig."

But it must not be entirely left to the imagination of the reader to picture to himself, the person of the boatswain; more particularly as his race, (and we say it with patriotic

regret,) if not already extinct, is, like other things of genuine British growth we could name, fast fading away.

Not that the production was, in this instance, so remarkable for its beauty, as for that intrinsic value, which is so often concealed beneath the most rugged appearance. For it must be confessed, Brace was no *beau*.

Fancy a long, raw-boned, powerful, bow-legged, deep copper-coloured tar, with an eye as piercing as his pipe.—A mouth like a haddock, and the quid-side of his cheek as large as a moderate sized wen. Fancy, like the *Hair-borough* breed of the present day, a thick fringe of bushy, black hair running under his throat, from ear to ear. A tail as long as his arm, stuck, on this occasion, between his teeth like a whip. Fancy such a being, attired in his Sunday (solitary) white frilled shirt, tucked up above his brawny elbows, with a rope in hand, sliding upon the cable down to the aid of the horror-struck matron.

"There you are, Ma'am," said he, handing her the rope, "just clap the bight of the bowlin-knot under your counter. No fear, Ma'am—we'll haul you up like a lady. I say, bear a hand and heave us down another rope," added he, hailing the forecastle—"d—n my eyes, if the gemmen won't slip the cable, and his *wind* in the bargain."

This intimation was not likely to allay the fears of the apothecary, who, if possible, was more frightened than any of the party.

"Mind," said Brace, addressing six or seven broad-shouldered tars, who had hold of the rope which was to haul the portly person of Mrs. Crank upon deck. "Mind how you haul up the lady—recollect she's lost her *bob*—handsomely—handsomely. No fear, Ma'am. Suppose you do heave your *pins* in sight, there's no one can see 'em but me, and I'm none o' your nice uns."

In this sort of strain, the boatswain pursued his merciless raillery, until the petrified pair were raised, wringing wet, on the forecastle, in the most miserable plight that can be conceived.

Hasty, who had already prepared a dry suit of clothes for the unfortunate Senna, was ready to conduct him to his cabin. Nor was the captain, who had been below when

the accident occurred, deficient in rendering that prompt relief, which the unfortunate situation of the lady patroness required. His coxswain's wife had already provided warm and comfortable attire for the suffering fair ones.

The pitiable plight of the dripping and drooping pair, as they were conducted aft, under convoy of the first lieutenant and captain, presented a striking contrast with the gayety of the festive preparations, and the decorated scene around—indeed, their appearance was truly calculated to have excited, in more tender hearted souls than sailors, a powerful sympathy; if not a passing reflection on the uncertainty of human fate. But no—though the arts and sciences flourished afloat,—though solutions could be solved—stockings wove,—or watches manufactured—though linguists, poets, painters, and sometimes a sea lawyer, were to be heard holding forth in the ‘King’s Bench’ of the *Spitfire*, still, singular as it may appear,—neither saint nor sentimentalist was to be found in her whole crew.

Indeed, the ludicrous figures which the lady patroness and her medical companion presented, in consequence of the loss of their wigs, as they walked all dripping aft, seemed to excite less the commiseration, than the laughter of the crew. The boatswain, who, like many wags in the world, would rather lose his friend than his joke, (particularly were the latter the better of the two,) was ready to split his sides with laughter, loudly exclaiming, as he followed them with his eyes—

“There they go,—like a couple o’ craft in a hurricane, scudding* under *bare poles*.”

* A ship either scuds with a sail extended on her fore or main masts—or, if the storm be excessive, without any sail, which, in nautical language, is termed “Scudding under bare poles.”

CHAPTER XVI.

ALL IN THE WRONG.

"Here was wrong on both sides; and what could follow but confusion?"
LESLIE.

LONG ere the period to which our narrative has arrived. Crank, who had pursued the party with his telescope, alternately accupied in anticipations of disaster, in consequence of his enforced absence, and in murmuring denunciations against the ill-starred head of his poor coxswain for his lubberly mode of approaching the ship's hawse in a tidesway, had witnessed all the horrors of the scene. With all his bluff, overbearing habits, and uncouthness of phrase, nature had not stinted him in feeling: and no mother could have witnessed the imminent danger of her nursing with more lively alarm, or tender solicitude than he had that catastrophe, which, had it been realized in all its horrors, would doubtless have shortened the veteran's days. Fortunately, as the boat had gone ahead of the vessel, his view was somewhat obstructed, and consequently he was not aware of the extent of the danger to which his friends were exposed—he had seen enough, however, to convince him the boat was upset, and after the first shock had subsided, and his feelings had vented themselves in an imprecation of an enormity, suitable at once to the occasion, and the dignity of the veteran, he immediately turned his thoughts to alleviate their misfortunes by the only means in his power—he vociferated loudly for Emily's maid—he tore at the line which led from the chain to the bell rope, and which, little calculated for so rude an assault, snapped short in his hand—the most grotesque series of strugglings ensued to raise himself from his chair, and his rage had twice placed him on his feet, in an unavailing effort to reach the bell, when the alarmed cook hurried unceremoniously to his aid, and thinking he was seized

with some violent paroxysm of gout, burst open the door, and stood at his side.

"Why the devil don't you scud for dry duds?" cried the excited veteran, addressing Tiller's spare-rib, as if the poor woman were perforce cognizant of every circumstance in which he was at that moment interested. The only reply, if such it might be called, this mandate received from the cook consisted in a vacant stare, soon succeeded by a blush, which indicated a surmise that something awkward had happened to himself.

"What do you stand there for, like a fool? What are you staring at?" cried the old gentleman in an increased passion—"Why don't you scud for the traps?—scud,—I tell you."

The poor woman, in a fright, flew to her master's wardrobe, the contents of which were most unceremoniously flung out of the drawers and slides, till she had secured, as she thought, the unexplained, perhaps, inexpressible, object of her search.

"Here they be, Zur—don't'ee vlurrie theesel—don't'ee vlurrie theesel—it might be worzc," said the old woman, as she presented to her master a pair of short kerseymere unmentionables.

"What the devil are these for?" said Crank, flinging them back in her face—"d—n it, you women are always thinking of the breeches—don't you know, they are cap-sized in the yawl?"

"The Lord deliver us! you don't'ee zaey-zo, master. What, and Toomas too?—Well, well, well!" cried the old woman, wringing her hands—"I always thought i'fackins what them there pleazure parties on the water would coom too. Oh, dear, dear! what's to be done!—what's to be done!—my poor Miss Emily! Oh, Tom, Tom, Tom!!!"

"The devil Tom you, you blubbering old blockhead!—why don't you fly, as I told you at first, and get the dry duds for the women?" said Crank, forgetting, that in his hurry and alarm at the first shock, he had not even mentioned who they were. The old woman, with the assistance of Emily's maid, soon collected a wardrobe for the ladies, whom Crank directed to run down to the beach.

and *press* the first fisherman's-boat to take her instantly off to the brig.

Mrs. Tiller was no sooner despatched than Crank bethought himself of an expedient to quiet his anxious suspense—and now he felt the value of Burton's present.

"Give me that blue-covered book," cried he, pointing to the piano, as he addressed the lady's-maid, and the only servant now left in the house; "I shall telegraph the brig: in the mean time you be ready to bend on the numbers, and hoist them as fast as I tell you."

Though quite *aut fait* at telegraphing on her fingers, Martha was nothing of an adept in conveying a message through the medium of bunting; nor was the veteran now, from his continued excitement, altogether competent to condense a telegraphic despatch. He thumbed, and turned over and over the leaves of the signal book; in vain he sought the vocabulary for the truest selection of words to embody the inquiry he wished to convey—'*Let me know the worst.*' But no—there was no such word as '*worst*' to be found in the '*telegraphic*' part of the book. In fact, it was never imagined possible, by the proud constructors of our naval code of signals, that on board a British man-of-war matters could ever come to the *worst*.

At length, after puzzling his head for half an hour nearly, as to the best mode of shaping the purport of his signal, he decided upon applying one of the '*general signals*' to his purpose.

"I have it," said he—"here it is—'*Report Damages*'—that 'ill do it. Bend on," continued he, addressing the maid—"bend on '*twenty-four*'—that 's Blue Peter—let's see, though—yes, Blue Peter, over quartered red and white."

"Bless you, Sir!" said Martha, "I know about as much of blue Peter, as I do of saltpetre."

"Well, then, you simpleton, run into the garden, and fetch me the flags you'll find in the pigeon holes, marked *two* and *four*;"—for Crank, since Burton's present, had constructed there a signal-chest, which contained a complete set of numeral flags.

"Now," said he, as the maid brought him the flags—
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"there they are for you, both bent together; you've nothing to do but to hoist them up."

After fumbling a considerable time at the flag-staff, Martha, in mistake, inverted the numbers, and hoisted *forty-two*, instead of twenty-four, which she kept flying, and returned to the invalid to report her proceedings.

By the aid of all sorts of ante-spasmodics and other medicinal restoratives, the fair sufferers afloat were, by this time, not only considerably recovered, but, by the extraordinary despatch of Mrs. Tiller, again clad in odds and ends of their own apparel.

The cabin became crowded with both ladies and gentlemen. Emily was reclining on the sofa, and her mother seated beside her, when their many gratulations and soothing attentions were abruptly disturbed by the hurried entrance of the midshipman of the watch, who rather too loudly exclaimed, as he opened the door—

"Forty-two, Sir, is up at the flag-staff on shore, and it is still kept flying though we've hoisted the 'answering pennant.'"

"Forty-two?" said Staunch.

"Oh, Sir," said Burton, "I dare say Captain Crank, availing himself of an old signal book I gave him the other day, is anxious to know the result of the accident. I'll run and see what he means."

Burton instantly returned with a duplicate of the veteran's book in his hand.

"It's impossible the number can be *forty-two*," said the lieutenant, whose manner indicated, as well as his gesture, the most unfeigned surprise at the singularity of the signal now flying on shore.

"Why?" asked Staunch.

"Oh, it's impossible, Sir!"

"But why, man?—your reason?"

"Why, Sir?—Because the signification of *forty-two* is—but read it yourself, Sir," said Burton, stopping short and handing the book to the captain.

"Forty-two.—Let's see," said Staunch turning to the explanatory leaf, and reading the signification of number *forty-two* aloud—"Is the enemy in a sinking state?"

"*Enemy sinking!*" exclaimed Mrs. Crank, who caught

enough of the sentence to irritate her by the unlucky association of ideas excited in a mind, where words too frequently tyrannized over thoughts. "Oh, the heathenish wretch," she continued, rage almost choking her utterance, "to make so unfeeling a jest when—our lives were in such imminent danger!—But—I see it too plainly. The *enemy*, indeed!—No; thanks to the almighty and merciful Disposer of all events, the enemy, for it's *me* he means, has been most providentially spared."

Here she covered her face with both hands, and sobbed convulsively, and was only saved from an hysteric fit by the united attentions of the ship's surgeon, and her own body physician.

Of the ball it is unnecessary to say more than implied in Tom Tiller's observations—that "the capsizes had clapped a stopper over all."

CHAPTER XVII.

RECRIMINATIONS.

"All's not offences that indiscretion finds."

King Lear.

UNDER the circumstances of excitement naturally attendant on the calamitous issue of these intended festivities, it is to be presumed that Burton relinquished not the envied prerogative of reconducting to the anxious veteran Emily and her aunt. From the time of their descent into the boat, the old gentleman's eyes were perpetually on the strain to discover what had been the result of the accident. As far as 'counting heads' went, he could distinctly make out that none of his little crew were missing—a circumstance which led him, in a tone of congratulation, to exclaim—"Well, it's something to find that none of them have lost the number of their mess!"

As the boat neared the shore, he observed, with mingled

feelings of surprise and alarm, his niece supported by pillows, and on Burton's arm ; who was occasionally occupied in adjusting a heap of ship's flags and cloaks round her feet and person. The causes of these emotions were scarcely well defined to himself ; for while he attributed them to anxiety about his favourite, he occasionally felt a compunctious visiting as to the familiarity of manner, and alarming posture of those of the party in whom he felt most interested. He had been sufficiently chagrined with the implied neglect, or rather discourtesy, as it struck him, in the commander of the brig not having answered his signal ; but what most contributed to his annoyance, was his total inability to move from his chair, or to attempt to ascertain, in person, the real state of affairs. He was obliged, therefore, to act by deputy, and, notwithstanding his old-bachelor-like reluctance to employ a female on any mission of importance, Emily's maid was despatched to reconnoitre and collect intelligence.

But here again he was ordained to experience fresh mortification : for the warm-hearted girl's feelings were soon too much interested in the scene to permit her to comply with the tenor of her instructions ; all recollection of which was lost the moment she witnessed the piteous plight of her young mistress, whom she affectionately caught in her arms, bedewing her plentifully with her tears, and blubbering like an infant. Nor was it until reassured by the kind and grateful tone of Emily's soft voice, that her stormy grief subsided.

A tempest of feelings of another description now raged in the bosom of the old gentleman, at finding himself deserted during the period occupied in their tedious progress up the winding steep. Every effort he now made in his passion to get upon his legs, as they were unavailing, tended but the more to inflame his resentment, which, glancing with the rapidity of an arrow from the disaster to his own crippled state, and again from his lameness to the negligent messenger, unluckily happened to light, at last, upon his poor factotum, Tom, whom he repeatedly denounced as 'a lubberly old rascal.' "D——n the fellow," said he, "didn't I tell him to be cautious what he was about in a tidesway?—See what it is not to have been

there myself. But I might have known it all, if I hadn't been as stupid as he. All the morning I had a sort of *comeoverishness* about me that something would happen! This d——d gout, too, coming on just at the time, might have warned me. A man ought not to be above these presentiments—there 's something always in 'em—and yet that unbelieving sister of mine, as usual, will face me out it's all vulgar prejudice. She might as well deny there 's such a thing as Providence, and, strange to say, she 's always jabbering about it. I hate a soger's phrase, but now I 'm sure there 's some truth in their saying, 'every bullet has it's billet.' "

The noise of many persons in the hall arrested his attention, and stopped the volubility of his vehement invective. And, lucklessly, the first object on which his angry eye flashed, was the person whom he had predetermined within himself was the cause of the whole calamity.

"Scud, scoundrel!" cried he, the moment poor Tiller thrust his devoted head into the room—"away with you, if you don't want your brains knocked out," menacing him with his brandished crutch—"though brains you can have none!—you tripe-headed, lubberly, squinting old savage!"

Tiller was destined to be quickly avenged, and the veteran enjoyed not long the privilege of playing the part of assailant.

"Savage! would that he were the only one," exclaimed a tall, haughty, singular, sybil-like figure. Her fine person was loosely enveloped in the most incongruous and unbecoming attire. To supply the lack of stays, she had wound round her waist a long crimson scarf, whose embroidered ends depended *à la Turc*. Her head was bound up in a black handkerchief, now destitute of its wreathing curls, as her expressive face was of those enforced smiles, with which she was wont to smoothe the natural character of features; which, though fine and regular, seemed only calculated to display to effect the highest possible excitation of feeling. And now, pushing Tiller scornfully aside, she strode haughtily across the room, and when right in his front, contemptuously addressed her brother-in-law—

"Your barbarity, Sir, might have confined itself to your

own house, and not unfeelingly have made my misfortune a subject of mirth before a whole ship's crew!"

If the poor man's mind, already staggered through the violence of the feelings which beset him; the surprise and the shock which his awakened sensibility now experienced from this rude assault, nearly bereft him of the use of his reason.

"Barbarity!—My own house!—Mirth!—Ship's crew!—Why, Madam, what the devil are you at?—are you mad?—But what signifies whether you are or not!—Where's my girl?—get out of the way—let me see her. Poor child!—Come hither, come. How dreadfully ill she looks!" and, while the old man stretched forth his eager arms to catch her to him, as she came feebly forward, supported between her maid and Burton; the sullen tears chased each other down his venerable face.

The grateful Emily fell on his neck without speaking: as soon, however, as she had recovered herself, and was placed on a sofa which had been wheeled round towards her uncle's chair, she pointed to Burton, who stood beside her, and said—

"To your friend I owe every thing. He it was who risked his own life to preserve mine!"

"Brave heart!—did he?—It's like a sailor. Let me grapple him—your hand, my boy—I'll never forget it—long as live!—fine fellow!—I wish I was only First Lord of the Admiralty—I'd, I'd——" the rest of the sentence was unfinished, and he continued, gazing on Emily's pale features—"You may well call him friend!" said he, patting his niece on the shoulder, "and while I live, I shall never cease to be his."

To these effusions of gratitude Burton was saved the trouble of framing a suitable reply, by the rising indignation of the tragic heroine, which burst forth in an exclamation—

"*Friend!*—Fine professions, truly, while you denounce your family as *enemies!* What could you mean by it, barbarous man! in *my* condition?"

Here Crank, who was no longer under the influence of fear or excited sensibility, but at liberty to examine the sin-

gular attire of his sister, could not refrain from laughing, as he exclaimed—

“Enemy!—It must be all imagination—though, to be sure, you look as if in chase of an enemy, for you’ve got, I see, all clear for *action*—every thing battle fashion,” continued he, winking at the lieutenant,—“waist bound taught—black handkerchief round the head—not a *love-lock* to be seen.—Had her there, eh?”

“Unfeeling scoffer!—It’s not the only insult I’ve been doomed to bear from you to-day. Your sneering signal, too, might have been spared; and, when persons’ lives were in danger, it ill became you,” said she, pointing, as though in allusion to his gouty chair—“to sit in the seat of the scorner.”

“More of your tracts!—Egad, they seem to have turned her head!”

Here Senna, who was slow to embroil himself in family disputes, thinking there was a safe opportunity for mediating, attempted an explanation, and in a few words related the circumstances which had occurred in the *Spitfire’s* cabin, and the announcement then and there made of the strange signal seen flying at the cottage. In this he was corroborated by Burton, who observed that the signal number, forty-two, was still flying in the garden, which the captain would find, on referring to his book, signified—

“*Is the enemy in a sinking state?*”

The whole truth at once flashed upon the veteran’s mind, who, with cordial good humour, confessed the mistake had certainly given good ground for offence, which he heartily disclaimed, and thus apologized—

“Ah, if you had known my feelings then, sister, you would never suspect that I could have allowed myself to jest at such a moment.

Mutual explanations took place between the three gentlemen, as to the causes of the accident: unluckily for Tiller’s reputation, the explanation assumed all the aspect of a court-martial upon his conduct—differing only in this respect, that the poor fellow was doomed to be condemned without ever being heard in his own defence.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AVOWAL.

The hand which still held Juan's, by degrees
 Gently, but palpably, confirm'd its grasp,
 As if it said, "detain me, if you please;"
 Yet there 's no doubt she only meant to clasp
 His fingers with a pure platonic squeeze :
 She should have shrunk as from a toad, or asp,
 Had she imagined such a thing could rouse
 A feeling dangerous.

BROOK.

THE weather had, for the last twenty-four hours, indicated a probable change in the wind, which by blowing steadily from the south-west, had pent up his imprisoned spirit several days. It occasionally varied two or three points for a moment early in the morning and evening ; though it still blew pretty steadily during the day into the harbour. In one of these flaws, a slight shower fell, which was taken by the captain as a pretty strong presumption that the weather would break up ; and he gave orders, in the evening, that all should hold themselves in readiness for immediate departure, for that in the event of the wind chopping round to the northward and eastward, he should avail himself of the morning's tide, and weigh down by dawn of day. His motive for getting to sea at so early an hour was derived from previous observation (when a junior), of the inconveniences often sustained by vessels bound down channel, waiting in port, as is usual, for the arrival of the post, or for the completion of some object which might as well have been accomplished on the previous evening by a little forethought. In some instances, the vessel had lost the tide altogether, and in most, owing to this imprudent delay, she had failed to secure before dark such an offing, or distance from land, as was necessary for her safety, should the weather alter, and the ship have to contend with an adverse wind on a lee shore. The crew, generally speaking, as well as his

officers, were gratified by the intelligence ; but there was one heart which felt a more than ordinary acceleration of its pulsation, when it was announced by the captain on the quarter-deck, that the vessel would most probably weigh by daylight next morning. The words were scarcely out of his mouth before the person most affected by this intelligence solicited, and obtained permission to go on shore. And as he had attired himself for dinner, and a party was in the act of manning a boat to leave the ship for fresh vegetables and other purposes, a very few minutes landed him on the beach, and seated him beside the sofa at Camperdown Cottage, on which reposed the languid form of Emily. The character of her beauty was enhanced by the absence of the high flush of health, which rarely adds to the expressive grace of female loveliness ; and now borrowed from indisposition a soft languor, and touching interest, which, while it admonished him of her danger, kindled afresh within his bosom that flame which only burned the more wildly from fear of losing her ; and which he felt convinced, even long protracted absence could not check, much less extinguish. The partial exclusion of the light, deepened the shades in her pale countenance, and increased the interesting expression of each fine feature. Even the negligent *dégagee* of her attire, every fold of which, disdaining the harsh square outline of art, fell conformably with nature's soft sinuosities, accidentally displayed to the utmost advantage all the bewitching charms of her recumbent figure. Her voice always melodious, was now depressed to a whispered sweetness ; and there was, in her manner, an air of graceful tenderness, arising possibly from the recollection of his intrepidity in snatching her from death ; which as he had never before witnessed, increased his tumultuous agitation ; and encouraged his fondest anticipations. His pulse beat high, and the blood mounting, suffused his manly brow, and dimmed his vision. He felt his utterance had fled at that very moment, when he would fain have described, in language, equally glowing as his feelings, the ardour of his passion. They were alone ; and though but for a moment, he felt the opportunity was too precious to let slip. In vain he essayed to speak ; yet though

mute, nature bereft him not of arguments often irresistible with the softer sex. He had sunk on his knee by her couch, and while his eager eyes perused with intense delight the lineaments of her divine face, and betrayed, through the portals of the soul, the wild excitement of his agitated feelings, he grasped her delicate and unresisting hand (for fear had rendered her powerless), which he pressed alternately to his heart, and to his burning lips. The spell, which had hitherto bound him in silence, was broken by the violence of his emotions.

"Ah, Emily!—dearest and loveliest of women! what a glimpse of happiness has the last few days opened to my view! The prospect is abruptly closing, and it appears that I have discovered a treasure merely to lose it.—Might I, in taking this hurried leave of you, be permitted to hope, that while borne by duty and ambition far from my heart's home, I might still live in your recollection, how great would be my consolation! To-morrow's dawn separates us for a period; which even in prospect appears to me an age. Nothing can render the interim supportable, except the anticipation that on my return I *shall* find you, though restored in health, still unchanged in mind. Such an absence it would be impossible to endure, unless encouraged to hope, that, in returning, this intimacy may be renewed, which I feel but too sensibly, can alone give zest or value to life."

At this critical minute, that eloquence, which now found its way like a torrent, was suddenly checked by the occurrence of one of those strange *contretemps*, which so often cross persons similarly circumstanced with the lieutenant. For, without the slightest note of preparation, or warning,—in bolted the stiff, quaint, figure of old Tiller, before the delicate and feeble girl had time to disengage her hand from his grasp; or he himself could spring from his embarrassing situation."

"I axes your pardon, Miss Emily," said the old fellow, in a hurried manner, which made it doubtful, whether it were the result of embarrassment in consequence of his intrusion, or the effect of surprise at the discovery thus singularly made, by one, perhaps, less qualified to fathom a secret, or develope a mystery, than any being in the house

(his master always excepted, who openly made it his boast, that he "knew nothing about either women or their ways");—"I axes your pardon, Miss," said Tiller, "but I only comed the rounds as usual, to pick up the *shakings*,"—and so saying, he proceeded very deliberately, as was the custom in the navy at his day, to affect to collect whatever lay on the carpet; whether thread ends, or fragments of paper, and deposite them in the 'oakum bag,' (as he termed it) set apart for their reception: which *important* duty being performed, he retired with the same provoking composure, and again left them to themselves.

Burton had ere this regained his seat, and so much presence of mind as to induce him to rise and close the door; which Tiller had designedly (it would seem) omitted to shut. With equal earnestness, but with greater caution of manner, he recommenced his suit. He rapidly stated his expectations, and with marked modesty alluded to his services, with the prospects he had of professional advancement; which he trusted would remove any objection her mother and uncle might feel to their union. Here Emily seemed to smile faintly; and he resumed by intimating that he had reason to imagine himself favoured by a friendly preference on the part of her uncle, who, he presumed, could entertain no objections, except as to the disparity of their fortunes. Here he was about to enter into the possible reasons which might influence her mother; when Emily arrested the progress of the argument by assuring him, "that on her mother's acquiescence, he would be wise not to reckon;" although she admitted, with a blush of grateful acknowledgment, "that he might have expected he had established some claims on Mrs. Crank's regard; for had he not, under Providence, been the means of preserving a life, to her certainly dear, she must have ceased to be a mother, and been for ever precluded from the hope of being called on to sanction the disposal of a daughter's hand. She confessed that, to herself, his acquaintance had been both agreeable and profitable;" and concluded, just in time to prevent the re-opening of the door cutting short the avowal, by "assuring him that she *should* be *always* happy to hear of his welfare."

The gentleman took this as the lady really meant it—

that he would be at liberty in future to correspond ; and might possibly have testified his satisfaction by some overt-act of delight or delirium, had not the lady just mentioned unexpectedly stalked, like the unwelcome ghost of Banquo, into the apartment.

CHAPTER XIX.

CHECK BY DISCOVERY.

“Round about, round about.”

OLD GLEE.

ACCORDING to the ‘articles of war,’ established at Camperdown Cottage for fifteen years past, all intrusion on the *siesta* of our old friend was considered, if not absolutely high treason, at least the *crimen læsæ majestatis* and punishable in the next degree. But the apparent urgency of the case out-weighed every other consideration in Tiller’s opinion, and warranted a departure from the strict line of discipline ; and satisfied of the rectitude of his motive, which originated in his anxiety for the honour of the family, he entered, with a little of that *brusquerie* peculiar to a man who feels his importance, the room where his veteran master lay, courting, by every delicate assiduity, that repose, which, like a coy nymph, is so difficult to be won by the blandishments of age.

“Who the devil’s that ?” cried Crank, upon Tiller’s affecting to stumble as he entered the room.

“It’s me, Sir.”

“Me, Sir !—D——n it, I thought ’twas a top-maul coming down by the lump. What the deuce brings you here at all making such a noise ?”

“Noise, Sir ? I never was the man to make a noise about nothing.”

“Nothing, indeed ?—when a man’s napping !”

"Ah—Lord bless you, Sir—it's when a man's napping, the *mischief's* done."

"You may call it mischief if you like, Mister Thomas—but to me, I can tell you, it's second nature."

"So my Misses says, when she's skinning the eels."

"Well, well—d——n your eels—there, there—that's quite enough. Make sail, and leave me to myself."

"If *I* doesn't, Sir—I knows there's some one else soon will."

"Why, what tack's the fellow on now?"

"On what tack, Sir?—On that tack, that a man may keep his wind, and needn't bear up for no one; as long as he knows he's doing his duty."

"Holloa!—Holloa!—it seems to me as if you'd hauled your jawing tacks aboard."

"I axes your pardon, Sir, I've nothing aboard more nor I ought—nor no one can say, as I ever was the man to make a nitty below, or alarm aloft for nothing."

"Well, no one said you were—there now—shut the door—top your boom—and let's have a little rest."

"Rest?—there's no rest in the matter, Sir,—things 'ave gone too far already," said Tiller, with an unusual degree of warmth, addressing his master.

"Things gone too far already, indeed!—open mutiny, by the Lord. D——n the fellow, what does he mean?" said the veteran, rising on his elbow, and the blood rushing into his face. "I tell you what it is, Mister Tiller, if you think to come over me, with any o' your independent pot-house slang, or your long-shore-law, you're d——ably mistaken."

"Law, Sir? *I'm* no lawyer, Sir,—I never sarved me time to the trade o' lying. Nor you can't say I ever deceived you yet," continued Thomas, fidgetting at his master's wardrobe, and folding and refolding the veteran's apparel as he carried on the colloquy. "No, nor you can't say that Thomas was ever the man when riding on a lee-shore, expecting every moment to part, to be the first to report a strand gone, when perhaps 'twas no more nor a little o' the rounding chafed in the hawse."

"Well—what of all that? What the devil has that to

say to disturbing a man from his rest, and when you *know* too, it's contrary to orders."

"Was't contrairry to orders, Sir?" said Tiller, who was not to be diverted from his purpose; "was't contrairry to orders 'board the *Boyne*, Sir, to rouse the captain when there were breakers a head, or an enemy in sight?"

"I never said it was—and you know right well, that had the officer o' the watch so far neglected his duty—I'd 'a broke him, aye, though he were son to the First Lord of the Admiralty."

"Very well, Sir," said Thomas, banging the door of the wardrobe, as if conscious he had now overcome some of the difficulty of broaching this ticklish subject—"very well, Sir—by the same rule o' thumb. if I sees a squall brewing to windward, it's *my* business to report it to my master, napping or not. Isn't it better to clew-up in time than lose your sticks?"

"Lose your sticks? Why, damn it, are there smugglers on the coast?—Expect the garden to be robbed, eh?"

"No, no, Sir—there's no fear o' that as long as *Ram's* unmuzzled—but I doesn't know how it is," said Thomas, unwillingly drawling out his words,—“I doesn't altogether like the look o' things since this here—this here a —”

"This here *what*?" cried Crank, who, thinking there was something in the wind, betrayed as much impatience to solve his factotum's meaning as he before did to get rid of his company.

"Why, Sir—this here capering craft—matters seem to be all going the wrong way since she put into the port—that there *ball* business, and a——"

"Aye, that was all your curs'd lubberly look-out," interrupted Crank, alluding for the hundredth and second time, to the accident of upsetting the boat.

"Well, Sir," said Tiller, not a little piqued at this eternal rebuke—"well, if they got the blind side o' me then, you shan't, howsomever, have to say so now. So if you takes my advice, Sir, you'll clap on a double look-out to-night."

Here a mutual pause of some moments ensued. Crank

seemed impressed with a confused perception of some imminent danger about to befall him: Its indistinctness embarrassed him the more: His agitation kept pace with his awakening curiosity. From a prone position he rolled himself over on the sofa, and raised himself upon his hands, assuming the attitude of a half-roused lion. Then surveying with a scrutinizing glance his poor minion from head to foot, he caught that solitary eye of his, and fixed it, like a basilisk; gazing at him for an explanation, with an apprehensive, yet incredulous stare. It was in vain Tiller availed himself of the exclusive power he thus enjoyed over others in the condensation of mental intelligence through an exclusive optic. Even aided by the man's weather beaten features, no distinct picture was conveyed to Crank's *sensorium* of the description; or the extent of the danger which his servant seemed fully persuaded awaited him. Tom shook his head—looked pitiful,—twisted his tail,—squirited his 'bacco juice, despite of another of the articles of war, on the floor, and drew forth a long-winded sigh. At length, finding he had reckoned without his host, in calculating on the expressiveness of his features, he, as if in pity to his master, thus broke silence. "The gemman's a nice gemman enough; and moreover bears a very good karector aboard—but still, you know. Sir,—there's never no harm in keeping—keeping—a——"

"Keeping me in suspense, you mean, you blind old blockhead. What the plague are you at? Why don't you say what you 've to say, like a man?"

"I'm coming to it, if you'll let me—all in good time, Sir—no man likes to be ahead of his reck'ning—but it looks to me—(mind, you know, Sir, it's only a notion of my own——)"

"D——n your notions. Here, you have been for ten minutes annoying me with an infernal *notion*—working a traverse about a trifle, and a—a——"

"Well; Sir, if you think light o' the business there's no kashun to overhaul more o' the matter; but I know," said Tom, carelessly throwing his tail over his shoulder, "I shou'n't call a cutting-out job a joke—nor think it

a trifle to find some on 'em had tricked us ; and slip't their cables in the night."

"Who? what?—d——tion, what d'ye mean? Surely there's nothing,—nothing happened I hope, eh?"

"I doesn't know, Sir," said Tiller, with emphasis—"all I know is, when I went my last rounds to pick up the shakings in the drawing-room—what should I see, but him, down on both marrow-bones, shoving Miss Emily's fist in his mouth, and slobbering it all over like a sucking calf."

"Who?"

"Why this—Mister Burton, to be sure, Sir."

"The devil! D——n the fellow, I thought he was more ashore than he ought. The sly jade!"

At the first intimation of real danger, Crank had started on his legs, and, aided by the helping hand of Tiller, regained his perpendicularity. As was his custom, on occasions of importance, he was observed hitching up the waistband of his small clothes alternately with one hand or the other ; and having hemmed twice, he prepared to sally forth. Tiller, as usual, fell a few paces in the rear, as the veteran proceeded hobbling along the hall : Crank muttering to himself, with another tuck at his inexpressibles,—“Where could her mother be?”

"Why, bottomizing with Mister Senna in the garden," voluntarily replied Tom.

"*Bottomizing?*—Devilizing ! fitter for her to look after her daughter. She'd look rather foolish if she found the painter cut, and the craft adrift."

Crank had hardly uttered these words, when opening the drawing-room door in no little excitement, he discovered Emily reclining on the sofa as he had left her, and her mother and the lieutenant in conversation, at the further end of the room.

"How d'ye do, Sir. Why, how's this?" said the commodore, addressing his sister. "I thought you were in the garden, bottomizing, as Thomas calls it, with the doctor."

"Fie, brother—I only wonder that you can at all tolerate the vulgar phraseology of that illiterate, unbelieving wretch. He's a perfect sea bear, Mr. Burton,—an absolute marine monster."

"I only wish he heard you calling him a *marine*. He'd rather be called a *soger* at once."

Burton and Emily looked at each other as if somewhat relieved by the turn the conversation was taking, from the apprehension that Tiller had communicated the discovery he had so abruptly made.

Mrs. Crank resumed—"But if you wish to know where I was, I can inform you that I was receiving a most instructive lecture on the medicinal properties of plants; and regret that the lecturer's professional avocations prevented his remaining to tea."

Crank had predetermined with Tiller to be calm, and saw the propriety of adopting his advice in not taking the parties suddenly aback.

"Well, how long have *you* been here, Mister Burton?"

"Why, I should think nearly an hour, Sir,—but Miss Crank was unwilling to disturb your repose."

"So was Thomas," said Crank, sarcastically—"and what have you been up to, Miss Emily?"

"I, uncle?" said Emily, a little confused—"I've been too much indisposed—to—to—in fact, do any thing."

"Indisposed in one sense, perhaps," said Crank, somewhat mysteriously.

Determined, however, to investigate the circumstances detailed by Tiller, Crank remained for some moments mute, beating, as it is vulgarly termed, the devil's tattoo, with his cane on the floor, and revolving in his mind like a man at his wit's end, the best mode of communicating with the lieutenant apart, without exciting suspicion in the party.

"I must get you before you go, Mister Burton," said Crank, "to step into my room, and see what's the matter with the barometer: it appears to me to be quite out of order—the quicksilver keeps down in the kelson."

"I shall have great pleasure," said Burton, affecting a composure, which the renewed mysterious hints forbade him to feel.

"Well, then," said Crank, "we may as well overhaul *her* at once."

They both left the drawing-room, and as soon as they had entered Crank's own room, he cautiously bolted the door.

"Now," said he, "we are alone, out of hail of the women. Tell me—you havn't been—been a—(for you must know, I'm one o' your straight-forward fellows—hate working Tom Coxe's traverse to come at the truth—(say what I mean—and mean what I say—always come to the point at once—that's my maxim). Besides, there's no great harm in the thing after all—young men are young men all the world over—so you needn't mince the matter wi' me."

A fit of coughing, fortunately, cut short these ramblings and excursive flights of the veteran's erratic curiosity; which, with the intention of being condensed into point and terse interrogatory, would, but for this seasonable interruption, have wandered in his present vein, round the pole, and to the other side of the equator, ere it had formed itself into any question, capable of a replication. The interruption served the purpose of bringing Crank to his recollection, and re-assuring his young friend, who had been justly alarmed by the formal, serious aspect of the old gentleman, in commencing the above series of interrogatories, apologies, innuendos, and disclaimers, all in a breath, and he made up his mind to brave the storm, and avow himself openly as Emily's suitor, by the time the commodore resumed—

"Curse this cough of mine, it sometimes brings me up with a round turn, when I'm most anxious to speak. It's not from bad lungs, for I'm as sound-winded, thank God! as any boatswain in the fleet,—but it's a sort of a—nervous—d—d tickling in the throat—but a—but tell me—you havn't been—(don't mind me, though I *am* her uncle)—you havn't been—hang it—you havn't been talking soft nonsense to my niece?"

Burton, who by this time was perfectly collected, with great calmness replied—"Although, my dear Sir, you may imagine I have intruded on the privileges of hospitality; and looking at it alone in that light, you may possibly be impressed with an unfavourable opinion—"

"Not at all, my friend, quite the contrary. Hang it, there wasn't a gayer fellow in the fleet than myself. Why, Sir, I was a regular fancy man with all the Port-

Royal craft, from Black Judy up to Kingston-Kate—so don't be uneasy on that score."

This well-intended, though *outré* confession produced an instantaneous effect on poor Burton's nervous system. Perhaps not all the antespasmodics in the whole *materia medica* could so soon have restored his faltering tongue, as he now proceeded; placing his hand on his heart,—“I'm obliged by your candour; but I had, I assure you, Sir, predetermined to avow to you, as to an indulgent friend, that from the first moment I beheld your lovely niece, I became enamoured——”

“Enamoured!—that 's a silly novel-sounding phrase—it carries such a lubberly twang with it. Can't you say struck-comical, or smitten from clew to earing—some ship-shape expression. However, don't let me interrupt you.”

“Well, Sir, in candour I must confess, that this evening, for the first time, I have disclosed to her own ear, that preference which I feel; and shall always feel, she merits beyond the rest of her sex, both for the charms of her mind and her person. To the existence of this passion, I think she could not have been previously blind.”

“Nor Thomas either,”—muttered Crank.

“Yet, however ardently I may have disclosed my passion, be assured,—my respect for her,—and let me add, Sir, for yourself,—prompted me to make it with the utmost delicacy.”

“Delicacy!—you and Thomas seem to have very different notions on that head.”

“Surely, Sir, the man has not presumed to poison your ear with any insinuation derogatory to her, or my honour.”

“Why, no—he only seemed to think things were going too far—that is to say—you were making tolerable headway in the business—But tell me, what did the girl say herself?”

“I must confess, Sir, her answer was dictated by as much discretion as you yourself could have wished.”

“Discretion?—a crooked word that—if she mentioned it herself, take my word—there 's no *love* in the affair:—when a girl 's thinking of a man, that 's the last thing that comes into her head.”

"Possibly so—with one of another temperament, and less intellectual than your niece."

"Why the girl's *nowse* enough. She's my *own* bringing up. But, throwing aside all veering and hauling, how did it end?"

"In a mere permission to correspond during my absence."

"Well, well, there's nothing in *that*,—I suppose,—in a friendly way."

"Pardon me, Sir, I must be sincere; and once for all, acknowledge that I entertain for her a passion, which time or distance cannot abate—and that all other motives of ambition, whether professional or otherwise, are secondary to that of rendering myself worthy of her hand for life; and when I make this avowal of a preference founded on reason and passion, I beg you to remember, Sir, that it is not the avowal of youthful enthusiasm, or of one whose judgment has not been matured by experience. In a word, Sir, without her, I feel I shall never be happy."

"Tut, tut—that's the old tune. The first close-reefed taupse breeze of the Black Rocks,* will blow it all off. Believe me, love's like many other things at sea, very hard to keep in blue-water. No, no, it's time enough to think of a wife, after you've shipped the other swab, and made prize money enough to pay her mess."

"I hope that day is not far distant."

"Distant!—There's no calculating on promotion. Look at me, Sir,—I was fifteen years buffeting about in a cockpit; and never made a fraction of prize money until I was ten years post. Suppose any poor girl had waited for me? God help you!—it's all a lottery!"

"Perhaps so, without interest; but I flatter myself I possess that which is influential."

* Black Rocks—Rocks situated about five miles off the land, between the port of Brest and Island of Ushant. They are of the most forbidding, gloomy aspect, scarcely affording a resting-place to the lonely seafowl, and are peculiarly exposed to the fury of the elements in hard weather. A cruise here is prescribed (to use a medical phrase) very much in the nature of a corrective; and officers condemned to a melancholy cruise 'off the Black Rocks,' may sometimes safely attribute it to their being 'on the Black List.'

"Have you a cousin at the Board—or is your uncle First Lord of the Admiralty—or are you a Scotchman?"

"No, thank God! Sir, I'm of an old English family—I'm of the Burtons of Glo'stershire."

"Well, my dear fellow, you may be what you please; but unless you are one of the three I mentioned, you may drop *many* a card at the Admiralty, without being asked up stairs."*

Here a vain endeavour was made to open the door. Immediately after, Tiller announced that "the ladies waited tea." Crank suddenly turning on his heel, exclaimed "Coming, coming." Then, facing half round to the lieutenant, and holding the handle of the door, he said, in a low tone, "Come, let's join em—they'll think we're plotting mischief."

Burton, in great perplexity, now seized the old gentleman by the arm—mentioned his probable departure in the morning, and, with many expostulations, endeavoured to obtain some encouragement of his suit from his own lips, well knowing that he could hope for none from Emily's mother. Moved by this earnestness, and his kindly feeling towards the young man, he swerved a little from the straight path he on all occasions pursued; and calculating on the improbability of Burton's overcoming the obstacles which he was about to enumerate, he thus partially accepted him as the lover of his niece—

"Emily, you see, is a showy, fine girl, and much admired about here. The soldiers come skulking after her: but I'd rather she married a sailor, I confess—Besides, she'll be well off: but then married people can't live on hope,—I don't mean to slip my wind yet. Mr. Burton. You understand me? So, if she don't get spliced before you're made a commander, and pocket some prize money, you shall have my consent—that is, if Emily likes, and you continue in the same mind."

And having thus cautiously clogged his consent, with as many conditions as a dying man would a last will and testament of his freehold, copyhold, and other property,

* Crank, if alive in this day, would be agreeably surprised at the facility of access, now afforded officers under such circumstances. Thanks to the Lord High Admiral, and those immediately about him!

whether real or personal, he betook himself to flight, blowing along the passage like a grampus, and entered the drawing-room with flushed face, and in a state of evident excitement.

Far different was the face, as well as the pace, of his companion; as he slowly followed him with measured step, anxious eye, and a mind depressed by many forebodings, as to the almost insuperable difficulties which interposed between him and the completion of his sole, overwhelming wish. By the time he had reached the door, his breathing became short,—his lips parched,—his brain burned,—and his hands became entangled in the inartificial curls of his black hair. Conscious, how unfit he was to encounter the keen eye of Mrs. Crank, he stalked past like a ghost, and endeavoured to compose himself by a few turns in the cool evening air out of doors.

All around was placid and serene. The air was calm, and the flowers breathed fragrance. The shrill whistle of the blackbird, and deeper melody of the thrush, were interchanged from the opposite shrubberies. The sun was fast descending; and the highland to the westward had already involved in shadow, a portion of the harbour, where, in the full glare of the reflected sunbeams, lay his home upon the waters; all ready for sea. Her decks were still in a state of activity, owing perhaps to the wind having come round still more since his leaving her. The boat which had brought him on shore, was now returning to the ship, on board which he distinctly heard three bells struck, with an acute vibration of pain in the head and heart at every stroke, as though it were a parting knell for a cherished friend or loved parent. Nature vindicated that sway which she uncontrolledly exercises at times, as well over the stoutest hearts as feebler spirits: and a gush of scalding brine traced his burning cheeks, and kindly relieved his proud bursting heart.

Strange as it may appear, the tea-party waited in vain for his return, and twenty minutes had elapsed, ere Tiller announced his conviction that he had "cut and run."

"Umph," muttered Crank.

"Aye, and there," said Tiller, pointing to the foot of the sofa, "he's forgot his hat in his hurry."

CHAPTER XXI.

A RUMPUS.

What! gone without a word?
 Aye, so true love should do; it cannot speak.
 SHAKESPEARE.

Who could believe what strange bugbears,
 Mankind creates itself of fears,
 That spring, like fern, that insect weed,
 Equivocally without seed,
 And have no possible foundation,
 But merely in th' imagination!
 HUDIBRAS.

It may be readily conceived that the abrupt departure of the lieutenant, created no less surprise in the mind of Emily and her mother, than in that of Crank; who stubbornly resolved to himself to afford no clue to the mystery. From the mode in which he had received the intimation on which he acted, he had every reason to believe Tiller's secrecy might be depended on. Indeed, the old gentleman felt no small gratification in having an opportunity of playing off a little underplot of his own under circumstances which must have strongly excited the feelings and curiosity of the two fair delinquents, who had often kept him in suspense, under similar situations, for days, when one word in explanation would have cleared up the mystery. And if he had any regret on the subject, it arose from the conviction that the perplexity of the elder lady could not be above a tythe of that felt by her daughter. It was, nevertheless, observable, that however frequent the allusions made to the strangeness of this incident, Emily was too much occupied in unravelling her own thoughts, to join in the surmises or inferences of one so imperfectly acquainted as her mother with the previous circumstances to which this seemed obviously to have a reference; while

her uncle, with the unbending sturdiness for which he was remarkable, preserved a sullen silence, and left the field open to conjecture. He was observed at times to rise from his seat and walk a few paces, rubbing his hands together, as persons are wont when satisfied with themselves. The effect produced by this conduct was exactly that contemplated by the captain. Mrs. Crank's eyes wandered incessantly from her daughter to him, and from him to her daughter; and she was soon convinced by the anxiety of Emily, whenever she looked (which was but seldom) inquisitively towards the old gentleman, that she herself was at a loss to account for this singular behaviour. Piqued at being foiled by his unusual taciturnity, she returned to the charge again, and again, shaping her interrogatories with Protean ingenuity—sometimes as an exclamation—sometimes as an observation—sometimes as a question, and again as an answer.

"How strange, eh?"

"And so gentlemanly like a man!"

"But he's a stranger to us, and it is not to be wondered at!"

"Persons should not be too indiscriminate in their civilities."

"It should be a warning to you, Captain C., how you open your door to people you know nothing about."

"Did Thomas really say he saw him go?"

"Do *you* recollect, Captain C.?"

Finding him imperturbably silent, she, as a *dernier resort*, hastened to adopt the part of respondent to her own questions.

"No, now *I* recollect, he did not."

"I might have spared myself the trouble of asking you."

During this attempt to extract evidence from an unwilling witness, which by-the-by, might have done honour to legal accumen in the courts of Westminster Hall, she had the mortification to perceive that the witness proved himself more than a match for either Sir Vickery or Garrow, in their best days, by obstinately 'standing mute.' This contempt of court was resented with becoming spirit, and he was accordingly condemned to undergo the *peine dure et forte* in a voluble volley of inculpation and reproach.

“ Well, I’m sure, taciturnity seems the order of the day—what may we expect next ?—A mere stranger would have more civility—I’m justly punished for so far demeaning myself.—Profesional wit, I suppose—can’t comprehend it—perhaps that marine monster, Tiller, might.—But it is beneath my resentment.”

Crank was now perceived rubbing his hands in an excess of delight at witnessing his success in tormenting, while a thousand emotions successively assailed the peace and pride of the high spirited invalid on the sofa. To some of the inuendoes contained in her mother’s previous attempt to extract information, she would fain have replied, as they appeared to convey a censure on her own conduct ; yet here again she was checked by the dread she entertained of revealing that to her mother of which she might still be ignorant. Even to attempt her defence from injurious suspicion, would involve her in a confession which might be perverted to her own prejudice : while the doubts which pervaded her mind as to what had transpired in the interview between her uncle and her lover ; and, more than all, those arising from the singularity of his sudden disappearance, rendered her situation one of greater perplexity than can well be imagined. In such a situation, she felt it would be most prudent to affect an unconcern she did not feel : but resolved, ere the night was over, to attempt to glean information in an opener and more accessible field.

Meanwhile the fugitive, scarcely conscious of any thing external, had arrived at the beach, and finding that the boat had returned on board, jumped into the first fisherman’s skiff which offered, and was soon rowed to the brig. The sentinel and the officer of the watch were both surprised at his appearing uncovered, as he mounted the side. He, however, waited for no question to be asked, but descending to his cabin, ordered the fisherman to wait. In the interval between this order and his re-appearance, he had blotted and torn up four or five sheets of paper, ere he could indite an intelligible scrawl ; or one which at all seemed to convey his sentiments. He was compelled at length, by repeated messages from the boatman, who, begged “ the gentleman would hurry, or he wouldn’t save

his tide," to seal and direct that which was less to his mind than any of its mangled predecessors.

"There," he said, thrusting the letter into the impatient messenger's hand, "take this to Camperdown Cottage—ask to see the young lady, and deliver it into her own hands, but be particular not to intrust it to that prying old fox with the one eye. Now, remember, *only* the young lady, and there's payment for your trouble—quick; be off."

In due time that evening the fisherman appeared at the cottage, and passed the out-posts, old *Ram*, and the afore-said prying fox, to whom he refused to communicate his business. Tiller repaired to the drawing-room, where he found Mrs. Crank alone, both Emily and her uncle having retired for the night, and acquainted her that a strange man wished to see her daughter, and refused to say on what errand he came.

Mrs. Crank, who was never slow to suspicion, appeared to hesitate for a moment—an air of thoughtfulness was soon succeeded by a self-satisfied smile—

"You are certain he's a stranger?" said she. "Sartan, Ma'am."

"Well, then, say nothing of Miss Crank, but send him in—perhaps I may answer as well, since she can't be seen now."

The fisherman, after some delay, was ushered into the presence of the lady. There was but a single chamber-candle in the room, as if the person seated on the sofa was about to retire to rest, and the lady desired him to say what was his business with her.

With three wipes of his right foot on the green carpet, and a tug of the forelock of hair overhanging his forehead, he approached by slow degrees; while his respectful diffidence prevented him from coming right in front of the lady whom he thus accosted—

"Be you Miss Crank, Ma'am?"

"Yes," whispered the matron.

"'Cause if ye bees, Miss," (with a pause)—"I've got zummet for ye from the man-o'-war as 'ill maikie thee aizier, and, meyhap, cure your dizorder."

A slight titter, or suppressed laugh, at this observation, convinced him she was the fair correspondent for whom

the letter was destined, and the next minute it was fast clasped in her eager hand.

"You 'll read un, mayhap?—and I 'll wait for a token back."

"No, no," said the matron, in a hoarse tone, which startled him as to her identity—"it requires no answer."

"Why, bless thee heart, thee can't tell by outside any more than I can without looking thee in the face, if you be the roight parzon to open it."

Emily's attendant Martha at this moment entered to say that Miss Crank wished to see her.

"Why, baint *this* Miss?" roared the outwitted waterman.

"Silence, brute!" said the matron, rising with offended dignity, and eyeing him contemptuously; "leave the house, and beware how you come on such errands again, you poor incompetent agent of vice and mischief."

"Dang it—fakens," replied the fellow, "a moight a known it was an old un, by its croke. Zo I 'ze knocked down th' wrong pin, loike a boobie."

As he retreated along the passage, he was encountered by old Tom; who, aware of his mishap, now repaid the fisherman's distrust by tauntingly remarking—

"So, you scaly raggunuffin, you thought if you stuck your head in the mud like an eel, nobody 'd find you out—D——n it, I 'm up to your dodge. You thought you were too deep for a fellow—but it sarves you right;—and I 'm glad you 're caughted in your own net."

"Why, dang it—who could trust to thee? Didn't the gemman zaiy, thee were the worst vrend he 'd a got—and cautioned me not to trust to the prying old vox with the blind eye."

Tiller contented himself with muttering a curse at him for a rascally liar, and bundling him out of doors, to find his way in the dark. The uncouth, angry confab in the passage, ending in a violent slam of the hall-door, which shook every article of furniture in the cottage, alarmed the owner so much, that his bell was soon in requisition, and Tiller appeared at his bedside.

"Why, Thomas, what's all the noise?"

"Nothing, Sir—I know *you* 'll be thinking it *nothing*—for so you said afore."

"Come, none of your round-about rigs—tell me directly the reason of all that row."

"Well, if you must know, Sir, we was boarded in the smoke."

"Who?—how?—where?"

"Mister Burton, Sir."

"What, come back at this hour?"

"No, Sir,—but a fisherman."

"A fisherman?"

"Yes, Sir, an enemy."

"An enemy?"

"Aye, an enemy; Sir, I told you how it 'ould be."

"The devil. Hand me my pistols—what is he at—where is the villain?"

"Bless you, he's gone, Sir."

"And why all this alarm? What has Mr. Burton to do with it? Explain, scoundrel—explain all, or you shall have the contents of this in your head," said the irritated veteran; half-levelling a pistol at his favourite.

"Fire!—With all my heart, Sir. If you'd given a body time, you'd a heard it all. Now I'm mum,"—and he stood looking calmly at his master, with his arms akimbo.

"Provoking rascal!—was ever man so curs'd as I, with a mule-headed swabber, that won't lead or drive."

"Mule-headed swabber!" muttered Thomas.

"Well, come, take your own time—tell me, is there any thing amiss? Are we all safe now?"

"Damme if I knows, Sir—but here 's the misses herself—she knows more o' the matter nor me."

"Close the door, man,"—said Crank—"quick!"—but it was too late: there the lady stood, in the door-way, a letter in hand; and as Tiller ceased, she opened her fire on the veteran.

"Pretty doings!—and you too, at the bottom of them!"

"Of what, Madam? of what?"

"Of this letter, Sir, to your niece, and of the whole mystery, as it now appears."

"I wrote her no letter—are you all mad?"

"Answer for yourself, Sir—can you be in your senses, to suffer yourself to be made such a dupe, by a young

libertine like him—or encourage these clandestine and shameful proceedings? Besides, the letter itself is worse than equivocal—and I am, indeed, to be kept in the dark, am I? I'll leave not a stone unturned to counter-mine so iniquitous and unholy an alliance against a mother's peace."

"Peace!—I wish you wou'dn't disturb my peace I know,—this is the second time to-night."

"For shame, Sir, to affect to treat the matter lightly—I have his letter!"

"Whose letter?"

"Why, that *parvenue protégée* of yours, Mister Burton!"

"Burton—why what's he done?"

"*What!*—why written a letter to Emily, which insults her most grossly, and for ever disgraces you."

"It's impossible! It's not in his nature—an unassuming, modest——"

"Very modest, indeed!—Infamous wretch!—I'll read the disgraceful letter, and leave it even to this poor heathen here, whether he ought ever to be permitted to enter the doors again."

"I doesn't know that, Ma'am—but as matters stand—a good look-out would be adviseable—and I told the captain as much this evening."

Here Mrs. Crank proceeded to read from the paper in her hand—

"*'Doubtless, my ever dearest Emily,'*

"*'Ever dearest—was there ever such impudence!*

"*'For I cannot bring myself to address you by any other appellation, you must have thought my abrupt departure unaccountably strange.'*

"Strange, he calls it—I call it, rude and vulgar."

"*'Prudence dictated that it was impossible again to have appeared in your presence, much less to have taken a cold and formal leave of you after what had previously passed.'*

"Passed! Indeed things, one would imagine, had come to a pretty pass. God grant they hav'n't gone too far!"

"There it is, Ma'am," said Tiller,—“that 's exactly what I says to the captain this evening.”

“‘It was better for both—your uncle knows all.’

“Knows all!—what do you know, Sir?—As a parent, I insist on your relieving my suspense.

“‘I confessed every thing—and he bore it better than I could have possibly expected—indeed, he rather encouraged me at last.—He said, he had been gay himself, and thought it was excusable in youth.’

“No doubt you bore it philosophically enough, to be sure.—How could you, with any face, affect to be shocked, after your own licentious admissions?—Encouraged him, too!—Veteran villany.—Why not let such a monster loose on any other females, than those of your own family?

“‘Your own discretion will dictate the best time to break it to your mother—though I almost dread the result.’

“Unparalleled scoundrel!—this requires no comment. Just Heavens, what have I lived to witness!

“‘The inspection of the barometer was only a ruse of the old gentleman to take me to task.’

“That proves you 've been a pander to his guilt!

“‘So I suppose he means to keep your mother in the dark.’

“Providence be praised, the darkness is dispelled. ‘He is a light to our feet,’ as the Divine Word assures us, ‘and a lanthorn to our path.’”

“No, Ma'am,” said Tiller, “he came without a lantern, for I bundled him out in the dark.”

“Ungodly scoffer, peace!

“‘I have his permission to write.’

“But he 's not got mine.

“‘Which I shall most gladly embrace at every favourable opportunity. Until that happy day, which again restores me to the only society I shall ever prize; believe that an attachment for you which no pen can describe—no other heart can conceive, animates every thought of him, who delights to subscribe himself,

“‘Your devoted

“‘FREDERICK BURTON.’

"Oh, aye—there 's the ardour as usual—just concludes like every other artful and seductive pen—but it shall rest with me to cut up the connexion by the roots. I'll make it my study, night and day, to defeat such infamous intrigues, which I'm astonished you should be detected in, without blushing for your own shame and depravity."

During the reading of the letter, and the paraphrase thereon, Tiller appeared to sympathize in all the mother's feelings; and was observed, when completely silent, to accompany every forcible expression or epithet that escaped her lips, with a corresponding wave of the hand, an oscillation of the body, or a vigorous flourish of his arm: much after the manner of those dumb duplicate actors on the Roman stage, whose duty, we are told, it was to accompany the recitation of the principal performer by appropriate action and gesticulation.

Crank remained perfectly quiet, until the enraged matron arrived at the climax of her passion, when she appeared lost in a reverie of prayer, or possibly malediction.

"Heave the letter here," cried Crank,—“let me read it without any of your d——d sermonizing nonsense. It appears to me, you 've mistaken the telegraph altogether.—'Fore God!—She 's turned it end for end.”

Having perused it, with the aid of his spectacles, he flung it into the middle of the floor, exclaiming—“It 's all right—upright and manly,”—and then addressing his sister, said, “Don't you now be railing at Emily in her present state—it 'll all blow over—and I told the young man so himself.”

Seizing the letter, and darting at Crank, as he folded himself with perfect composure in the bed-clothes, a glance of indignation from those eyes of fire, which would have shaken the nerves of any man less susceptible of fear than himself, she retreated to her own room, to vent her spleen alone.

As it has been said, that a husband is, of all men in the world, the last man to know his own disgrace, so poor Emily, in this instance, was destined to be calumniated, and her character traduced, while she reposed her inno-

cent head on a pillow, which as yet, nor knew—nor merited a thorn.

Wearied out by the agitation of her own thoughts in consequence of the occurrences already detailed, and in the vain endeavour to reconcile the inconsistencies of Burton's conduct, she had fallen asleep too soundly to be disturbed by the noise around; and, as is the case with girls in her situation, she had so effectually courted Somnus, that the good-natured god had brought the penitent offender to her feet, to clear up the whole mystery, and render her slumber as happy, as it was refreshing.

CHAPTER XXII.

PARTING CO.

He stood, and gazing from the stern,
Beheld his native Spain receding far :
First partings form a lesson hard to learn,
Even nations feel this when they go to war ;—
There is a sort of unexpressed concern,
A kind of shock that sets one's heart ajar :
At leaving even the most unpleasant people,
And places ; one keeps looking at the steeple.

BYRON, D. C. L.

No people have greater reason to deplore the fickleness of mortals in point of faith, than persons circumstanced like ourselves : or to run the risk of being thought heterodox, to lament that Religion is as liable to change and alteration as Fashion itself. But for this circumstance, we should have had it in our power to adopt the glowing style of the Heathen Mythology, and acquaint the reader ; that scarcely had Aurora begun to blush for the consequences of her fond dalliance with the golden-haired God, and he himself fled from her embraces to yoke his fiery steeds, and mount the empirium, than the sons of Neptune were roused as effectually as if by the conch of the Tritons :—Or in other words, the Jolly Jacks of the *Spitfire* were

roused out from deep sleep by the shrill pipe of Bob Brace, boatswain of the said brig—and ere the first yellow streak of light had faintly marked the orient verge of Heaven, as the coursers of the sun pawed and plunged to break their confinement, and scour the fields of æther; the anchor was weighed, and the ship, under a crowd of canvass, with a light wind from the north-east, was fast clearing the port.

Burton, it will be imagined, was not one of the last, to quit a fallacious dream for dull reality, and indulge in a parting glimpse at a scene endeared to him by the most animating recollections.

During the period occupied by the ship's company and officers at breakfast, although not regularly his watch, Burton volunteered 'to take charge of the deck.' In so doing, he was as much actuated by a wish to be alone, and escape the observations likely to be made on his singular conduct the night before, as to afford himself an opportunity of now and then catching by stealth, a wistful glance at that central spot of earth, which had so suddenly absorbed all his thoughts and wishes. He was observed by the quarter-master and mate of the watch, on one of the after carronades, leaning over the hammocks, and directing his attention, with very little intermission, to that part of the shore, on which was still discernible the eminence topped by Camperdown Cottage. As the distance increased, his glass was called to his aid, and now and again he withdrew his intent gaze from the distant scenery, to apply his pencil to a small memorandum-book which lay beside him, as though noting down the land-marks and bearings of the coast. In this occupation, no suspicions were excited in the minds of the sailors stationed at the different haliards, who had before that seen him often similarly engaged when entering or leaving port. And it must be confessed, that neither the great circumnavigator Cook, of early celebrity, nor any of the best hydrographers of the day, ever felt deeper interest, or paid greater attention to a survey, than poor Burton upon this occasion. The most minute alterations in aspect or position, as the cottage receded from his view, were accurately 'timed,' as it is termed: each window as successively shut in by

other objects, (and, by-the-by, he was very intently occupied in vainly wishing some one of them would open,) was minuted to the moment. When the body of the building had altogether disappeared, the chimney-tops, and even 'the smoke which so gracefully curl'd,' as the poet hath it, announcing that Mistress Tiller's culinary labours had begun, and that Tom's coppers were heated for breakfast. Every trifling circumstance appeared to his strained eye an object of considerable interest.

Burton's soliloquizing was destined to be disturbed by intruders, who participated in none of his present feelings. The officers having breakfasted, some returned upon deck. The master was the first to accost the lieutenant—

"Come, Burton," said the blunt north-countryman, "come, I'll look out—bear a han doon to your breakfast, or you'll come in for monkey's allowance."

"I want no breakfast," briefly replied Burton—

"Luckily for you, my boy," returned Stowel, "for the idlers* have been swaying away on all top-ropes with the soft-tack, and the purser has razéed the round o' beef down to the floor-futtocks of the dish. Well!—is she all trimmed?"

"Yes, I believe so," said Burton, looking aloft, for the first time since the people went to breakfast; "perhaps the main-yard's rather fine—but, you know, we musn't disturb the men from their meals."

"Why, Quarter-master," said Stowel, with surprise, and looking at the binnacle, "how's this? You're a couple o' points to wind'ard o' your course."

"The lieutenant told me to haul her up, Sir."

"No wonder the main-yard's rather *fine*," said Stowel, sarcastically.

"Yes," said Burton, "I desired him. I was anxious to keep the a—to keep the—cot—that is, the harbour's mouth, open to a——"

"'Gad, I wish you a—kept your own shoot, and said nought about it. You'd look rather blue, if by altering the course, the brig came boomp on a rock!"

* Surgeon, Purser, &c. &c.

"Rock! Stuff!—I suppose," said Burton, "we know the coast just as well as you, Mister Soundings."

"Know the coast—the de'il thank you—you've had your run of it o' late. Weel, ha' ye any observations that will do for my remark-book?*" If you have, let me overhaul 'em, they may sarve a body wi' the Big Wigs at Somerset Hoose."

"Why, just before," said Burton, "we shut the cottage in——"

"Shoot in!" said the master, "aye, I think *you're* shoot *oot* there for a spell," and turning on his heel, he left him to conjecture what might be implied by an observation which seemed to have a reference to last evening's transactions, of which no one on board could, he thought, be cognizant but himself. Here the first lieutenant appeared on deck, and in a somewhat similar strain, expressed his surprise, that he had not yet repaired to the gunroom—

"I'm afraid you're ill, if you can't eat your allowance. I've often heard, that a man in love has no more stomach than an ostrich."

A youngster of an '*Academite*,' as the pupils of the Royal Naval Academy at Portsmouth are nick-named, remarked with a laugh, the simile was a strange one; for, said he, "I've read in natural history, that he's an oviparous *brute*, and when he's hard up for prog, can digest an iron crow-bar on a pinch."

Burton, after enduring the taunts of his companions, on his loss of appetite and unusual dejection of spirits, for some time with philosophic *nonchalance*, found the fire of these wags waxing too hot for him. The young catechist of the academy, presuming upon his being rather a favourite with him, remarking, "now, I'm afraid, Mr. Burton, you're attacked with jealousy, or the jaundice, for I'm sure there's something yellow in your eye," the seniors of the party set up a laugh at the youngster's drollery;

* Masters in the navy, by a judicious regulation of the Navy Board, at Somerset House, are required to make a return of every thing remarkable they may observe, in the different ports they visit, in the course of a cruise.—A practice which materially contributes to the acquirement of correct information as to both geography and hydrography.

and the lieutenant was fain to abandon the field to the witling, and retired to his cabin without condescending a reply.

From musing on his change of situation, he began to think with himself, how he could render it more tolerable, and the first thing which occurred, as a palliative to the pains of absence, was to provide something, as a substitute, which might represent his *inamorata* to the senses. To see—to feel—any thing which bore her impress or resemblance, must, he thought, tend to tranquillize his agitated feelings; he therefore determined, while the traces of her beauty were fresh in his recollection to transmit them to some firmer medium of memory, than the medullary membrane of the brain, where it was very possible the activity of the mind might wear them out, or render the outline ill-defined, or its colouring confused to the imagination. He, therefore, resolved to attempt her portrait, from recollection, while the latter was vivid; nor was he without other resources, whereby he expected to beguile the tedious hours of protracted absence. He formed to himself a project, for keeping a journal or personal narrative of his feelings, and the state of his heart: rather than (as it is too much the custom with the published narratives in the present day,) of the excellent breakfasts eaten here, and bad dinners there, by the intelligent narrator, for the benefit of future generations. On this he also resolved to set to work immediately, and open by a description of the effect produced on his sensibilities in the morning while observing the features of the harbour, and looking his last on its beautiful scenery.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE CRUIZE.

[On deck, beneath the shading canvass spread,
 Rodmond a rueful tale of wonders read,
 Of dragons roaring on the enchanted coast,
 The hideous goblin, and the yelling ghost.

FALCONER.

THE state of mind engendered by a long continued cruize, on a lone station, without change of locality or incident to enliven the dull sameness of prescribed duty, will be appreciated in some degree by those who have performed what is termed a voyage by sea. By this term, we are not to be understood, as meaning a drenching in a Berwick smack, or a smoking in a Scotch steamer from Leith to London:—though be it always recollected—“*Salvâ reverentiâ Scientiæ*”—that notwithstanding all our strong professional predilections, and the lover-like devotion with which we, as it were, idolize a square-rigged ship as a beautiful being instinct with life, perception, and volition; we are none of those, who would throw stumbling blocks in the way of the “march of infant intellect,” much less, presume to speak disparagingly of smoke or smoke-jacks, however hideous or unsightly they must appear to an eye accustomed to detect and linger over the excelling beauties discoverable by the nautical critic in a British man-of-war. Possibly we may be told this is childish, or at least unphilosophical; but satisfied we are, that ere, perhaps, a very few months are over, there will be found to sympathize with ourselves, another class of our countrymen, and that by far the most numerous, whose predilections are destined to suffer as great a shock as our own, in consequence of the substitution of the stern agency of iron and machinery, for sinews and animal labour. This observation is meant to apply to that class of men, who (inheriting from their ancestors, like the Arab of the Desert, a passionate attachment for, and cher-

ishing with a sort of family pride, the parchment which records the purity of the racer's blood, and his noble descent for ages, from sires of high renown) are doomed ere long to witness a similar revolution in the history, and an equal depreciation of the hitherto almost measureless value and unsullied ancestral pretensions of that noble animal, erst, our nation's pride.

The voyager who, peradventure, hath crossed the wild Atlantic, passed either tropic, or doubled either of the great southern capes of Africa or America, may not be inaptly compared, however unconscious he may be of the resemblance, to a barometer. Indeed, on examination, he will find his feelings, and, it may be added, his very faculties, are as completely under the influence of the elements, as the bark itself, in which he "braves the breeze," or buffets the billow. So long as swiftly impelled, though with a steady impetus, and little or no uneasy motion, the ship continues to fly through the water, with a "flowing sheet,"* that is to say, with that sort of steady favourable breeze, which may be said to set themselves and their "sails asleep," all is serenity and sunshine afloat. Every countenance, however dark or tawny, not excepting even that of the black cook Pompey, at the "cabouse," indicates *fair*. But let the breeze become light or variable—let it, with characteristic fickleness, veer about, or "flicker in flaws," what restless anxiety pervades every feature! what fluctuations between hope and fear usurp alternate dominion in every bosom on board! To follow up the metaphor still further: should the breeze draw round to a quarter adverse to their course, the clouds lower, or sky look threatening, how like the metal in the barometer, sinks, by marked and perceptible gradations,

* Our repugnance to "lubberly" phrases here, prevents us quoting a passage, from what the critics judiciously term "the *Mariner's beautiful song*, wherein the author sings of a "*Wet sheet, and a flowing sea!*"—Paling nonsense.—Doubtless the author somewhere heard of a "*flowing sheet and a following sea*," and has thus confounded the real reading with his metrical meaning. A tar of Tom Tiller's stamp would fancy the phrase meant—"A wet night, and a flowing can." A ship is said to have a "*flowing sheet*," when the wind crosses the line of her course at right angles, that is to say, a ship steering south, with the wind at west, has a flowing sheet; for if she were "close hauled," she would lie two points nearer to the wind—viz.—S. S. W.

the mercurial spirit of the man, as the wind chops round, and stares him in the face like a refractory tandem-leader, or the weather becomes worse: while those unhappy beings of the sombre and saturnine cast, become yet more intensely silent, sullen, and morose, until they are again relieved from a state bordering on despondency, by a favourable wind and fair weather.

Far different are the objects which give pleasure, the motives which actuate, and the anticipations which invoke and challenge the daring spirit of the vigilant cruiser. Little cares, or reck he, whether the blue surface of the unfathomed deep be softly ruffled by the sultry southern breeze, or the upturned bosom of the ocean be widely agitated by Boreas' bitter blast, provided the fickle element favours him in chase, or spares him those spars for whose safety he is as solicitous as the sweeping falcon for the wings which whirl him irresistibly on his prey.

Not that a cruise *per se*, or unconnected with its probable ultimate consequences, can be considered quite so agreeable a party of pleasure, when, perhaps, 'the sun disdains to shine' for days—the stars, too, neglect to light up their beacon fires to assist the doubtful steersman during the lonely mid-watch—or the uncertain moon refuses to lend her light for weeks together. For two-thirds of the cruise, perhaps you are buried under water, with hatches battened down—your ears stunned with the unceasing noise of creaking bulkheads—your nose assailed with the foul effluvia of the *fresh* water ('name it not, ye chaste stars'), which your thirst compels you to strain through your set-teeth; while keen uncompromising hunger makes you murder by mouthfuls the white-bodied, black-headed, *bargemen*, that breed and swarm in the dusty biscuit. Little would it boot us here to describe the yearnings of a young stomach even for this hard fare, or attempt to entice, in idea, the dandy yachtman who resigns himself each summer to 'ruff it along the coast on a rump-steak and a bottle of Port,' to make one of the cock-pit dinner party; and partake of the aldermanic feast which we have seen every day, of every year provided from the never failing dish of a fat 'double-piece of pork,'—or a lean joint of hard 'salt junk,' of mahogany hue. Nor do we imagine

that any lady, however nautically, or naughtily, disposed to brave the dangers of the deep, 'sighing for love,' as her *inamorato* must be presumed to be 'for glory,' is likely to be 'ticed away from her mamma by the ante-past (if her imagination be strong enough to realize the idea) of a comfortless cup of cold pea-coffee, sweetened with treacle; which is the sailor's only substitute for that nerve-twitching, vapour-engendering, sleep-banishing beverage of our modern females, Hyson tea.

Always excepting the present day, consecrated by even the working classes to the cultivation of the most abstruse science: and also excepting all places sanctified by the presence of a Mechanic's Institute, of a Lecturer, or even a Sub-director of the 'March of Intellect,' it must be admitted that there is no other time or place so well calculated as a noviciate at sea to inculcate morality—mend asperity of manners—cure self-sufficiency, or bring young puppies, or old women, of either sex, so completely to their bearings as pending a cruize of this nature. Two or three months spent in tossing about in the Atlantic would do more towards regenerating a man, and banishing unsocial propensities, or offensive peculiarities, than perhaps all the books that ever were written on the subject of Ethics. As this school of reform escaped the notice of Chesterfield, it is to be hoped that his next editors will admit in their preface that this nobleman was a perfect ignoramus. Nor was that chimney-sweeper at all out in his reckoning who threatened his only son, whom he was bringing up to the *profession*, that unless an immediate amendment was observable in his conduct and demeanor, he would make a *midshipman* of him, and send him to sea to learn manners. This moralist, though not himself insensible to 'climbing ambition,' corrected it with discretion, and must be presumed to have known something of nauticals as well as of nature. How unlike the probable critics of these pages!

So much for the philosophy of the profession!

DEPARTURE.

The day of their departure was fine, and with a favour-

able breeze, and exactly such as the adventurers could have desired in all respects but one ; namely, that it happened to be Friday—a day of omen dire to the superstitious seamen. Yet, though the sky was clear, and the wind propitious, the prospect of returning to their former cruising station, which had hitherto been very unproductive, seemed to throw a damp on the buoyancy of spirit, which is so generally observable in a crew when starting afresh for sea.

Had Burton remained on deck, or within hail of their raillery, he might have served his messmates in good stead in the dearth of other amusements ; but that officer, from the specimen which he had had in the morning of a very general disposition to be merry at his expense, resolved to yield to the storm, rather than subject himself to the alternative of resenting that mirth which might unfortunately assume the aspect of impertinence. In fact, he was a laughter-loving soul himself ; and, under any other circumstances, had he even been its object, would rather have promoted than repressed a joke. But, it will be recollected, that this was not the sole reason for his retiring to his cabin, where he had already availed himself of the assistance of the run-a-way book-binder's apprentice to provide himself with a neat half-bound volume of foolscap, doubled, so as to be portable ; which was to be set apart for collecting and recording a detail of the occurrences on the cruise : or, to speak with a stricter adherence to truth, intended to be the depository of those secret reflections, those anxieties and forebodings, which he felt would be his lot until his return.

In fact, had he allowed the youth to have exemplified his art in gilding and lettering the volume, the lad, who had, in common with many, heard whispered the state of his employer's heart, and was a wag in his way, would not have hesitated to have emblazoned on its back the happily alliterative title "*Love Log*."

The first page had, before the captain's steward knocked at his door, been embellished by a slight sketch of a certain young lady ; and the portrait was only laid aside in kit-cat, to prepare himself for dining, by invitation, with his captain : who kindly afforded him this opportunity of

avoiding the necessity of incurring the *badinage* and banter of the gun-room gentry.

In pursuance of Staunch's good-natured plan, he detained his guest rather longer than was his custom after dinner; and, without ever intending to satisfy the reader as to the source from whence we derived this information, we are assured that the conversation insensibly turned upon a subject which naturally must have excited the curiosity of the captain; and proved, considering the confidential terms on which they were, not an unacceptable opportunity to Burton for disclosing his mind.

"Fill up your glass, Burton, and I'll give you a toast," said the captain—"though, you dog, you hardly deserve it at my hands, considering the jealous care you took to conceal your fair Rosamond from my sight."

Burton blushed, conscious of what was about to follow: possibly the tint on his cheek was a little deeper from recollecting there was something disingenuous in that part of his conduct.

The wine was already sparkling in the glass to the brim, when Staunch raised it to his lips, exclaiming—"I'll give you the Emily of Dartmouth—may you soon be her commander."

"Thank you—thank you, Sir, for your kindness. I wish I could cherish a hope."

"D—n it, don't be down-hearted, man—'a faint heart never won fair lady.' She's a prize worth having—a nicer craft you couldn't wish to handle—besides, she's a freight worth venturing for—doubloons and ingots."

"Ah, Sir," said the lieutenant, with a sigh, "I would I were her owner."

"What 's to prevent it, man?—You've a claim of salvage. Recollect, man, I nearly expended my second lieutenant on her."

"I fear I shall live, Sir, to wish that happy moment when I snatched her from death had been my last."

"Phoo! phoo! that wish will be better timed after you are spliced awhile, and you have tasted the miseries of matrimony."

"With such an angelic creature, I feel that would be impossible."

"Bravo, my *preux chevalier*!—I thought so once with the poor lost mother of my own fine boys; but I have known what a matrimonial squall is, too, when long in port."

"That, from you, I confess surprises me, except it be a *façon de parler*—for I had considered you another proof that naval men uniformly make the truest husbands and fondest fathers."

"Granted: and believe me half the sentiment in the song—

'In every mess they find a friend,
'In every port a wife,'

is a flagrant libel on the profession—though poor Dibdin, I think 'twas he, was a friend who meant us well."

"If it be true at all, it can only be applicable to the lower order, and unthinking class of our sailors."

"Avast there, Burton—my experience is longer than your's.—Do they ever neglect their allotments to their wives?—and you'll acknowledge the privations of many of these fine fellows are severe. I suppose you've won the girl, of course:—but have you weathered on the mother?"

Here Burton shook his head.

"Oh, there you're taken aback—well, how does the old boy look up?"

"Ah, Sir, I'm afraid he looks down; for you know he sets great store by the girl, and talks of her perfections as if he were as much in love with her as I am."

"Well, but if it comes to the worst—suppose you were to make a cutting-out work of it? I dare say the girl herself wouldn't give the alarm."

While musing on the proposal which, probably, had he reason to calculate on his mistress's encouragement, would have been, long ere this, put into execution, the current of his thoughts was interrupted by the drum beating to quarters on deck. Be not alarmed, 'gentle reader!' this is no prelude to uproar, violence, or the din of battle; but, on the contrary, a custom invariably enforced on board ships of war long before our time, to ensure security to his majesty's vessels; and propriety and sobriety among

their crews. At this signal it is usual for the men to repair to their quarters and pass muster; here they, and the guns, are examined to see that every thing is in readiness lest they might be surprised in the night; as well as to discover how far they have complied with those strict and salutary regulations in the service relative to the enforcement of sobriety. Indeed, so strictly has this regulation been carried into effect by some officers, that we have known the whole crew to have been obliged to pass in review before the commander; and if the slightest symptom of presumed inebriety were observable, the delinquent, as his only chance of escape, was compelled to 'walk the plank' (not à la pirate, into the sea); but in sober truth to find his way from one end of a plank in the deck to the other, without daring to entrench on the black line caulking on either side: a difficulty which a *sober* landsman would find insuperable, while disturbed in his equilibrium by the rolling motion of the ship; whereas *Jack* has sometimes been known to triumph in this species of ordeal, albeit half-seas over.

Aware of the punctual attendance of his captain upon those occasions, who perhaps was as anxious to display his moderation at table, or to prove, in fact, that he was as competent, as the best, to walk a plank, if required; the lieutenant rose to retire, and accompanied the commander on deck.

From the press of sail carried throughout the day, the brig had made considerable progress, and performed nearly two-thirds of the distance towards her destined cruising ground; south-west of Scilly. As it is frequently found to occur with easterly winds, the breeze lulled with the setting sun, and before dark nearly died away. The night was soft and beautifully serene—the moon shone brightly, and silvered the surface of the gently undulating sea—the lower sails were flapping against the masts, while the lighter canvass aloft occasionally caught the resuscitating breath of the upper current of air, which was scarcely sufficient to keep steerage way on the vessel.

The hammocks had been piped down; and Burton, whose watch it was, now relieved Hasty of his charge.

“ There you have her, my boy—fine night for the idlers and fair weather birds. But mind, if a breeze should spring up, don’t be singing out to man your ‘ Camper-down,’ for the ‘ royal’ clewlines, or your ‘ Crank’s’ for the studding-sail down-hauls,” said Hasty, darting down the ladder without affording an opportunity for a retort from Burton, had he been in the vein. After walking the deck for two hours, as was his custom during the ‘ first watch,’ the captain bade the lieutenant good night, and retired to rest. The order book, which was to apprise him of the captain’s intention in the event of any change of wind or weather during the night, was put into his hand by the steward, and he was left to pace the deck alone.

The tranquil character of the scene, the soft balmy breath of the night, and the solitary aspect of her comparatively deserted deck, together with the stillness of repose which pervaded every quarter of the ship, but now and then interrupted by the creaking of the jaws of the gaff against the mast, all proved insufficient to restore our lieutenant to the equal tenor of his mind. His step was irregular—he occasionally apostrophized himself,—and again his mistress. With arms folded, and head bent downward, he wound his devious way, regardless of the obstacles which presented themselves on the deck, and was only roused from a soliloquy on the difficulties of his situation by tumbling over one of the carronnade slides, which obstinately refused to give place to the vigorous assault of his shin-bone. Recalled to his recollection by the pain resulting from this accident, his attention was soon arrested by a group on the fore-castle ; who, availing themselves of the fineness of the weather, and in the full presumption that during the remainder of their watch there would be nothing to do in the way of trimming or altering the position of the sails, had imperceptibly been attracted together, like children round a nurse gifted with mystic lore and fairy legend, in the hope of being amused with a tale from a seaman, whose talents at description, and adroitness in nautical metaphor, had procured him the distinguishing appellation of “ *Twisting Tom*,” and established his pre-eminence over every man in the ship in spinning, as it is termed by sailors,

A YARN.

"COME, Tom," said a topman who had just been relieved from the wheel, "come, tip us a twist—one o' your thoro'-bred starers, you know."

"Well! well!" says Tom, who was never at a loss for 'a yarn,'—"will's the word, and you'll weather the worst; so off she goes—rapfull and she flies—

"Well, you must first of all know, as soon as I was out o' my time, and gets clear o' the chap I was bound to, (for, you see, he 'd a double-walled colt in his fist from morn till night,) I ships in the *Sarah*, at Bristol, outer-bound for Jamackee. She was one o' your deep-waisted craft as was rose on; and always risked the run for the market.

"Well, we sailed on a Valentine's day, what unfortunately fell on a Friday. We 'd a stock o' live-lumber aboard, as crammed every chink in the cabin. Let's see—there was a couple o' your West-Ingée planters;—one, a good sort of fellow enough, for he'd always at hand a throat-seizing† or so, for the man at the helm; but t' other was a reg'lar built Pyawe, a platter-faced chap, with more jaw nor a jay in a calm; but come on a breeze, and he'd dive like a duck. Then we 'd a cornel of one o' your Quamino rigemens—an old ball-headed buffer, with an eye like a firrit, and a nose, aye, as 'ou'd fairly strike fire like a flint. Heave the log when you would, he'd freshen his nip; for 't was all one to him which went the fastest, the ship or the bottle. Then we 'd his wife; a wizend-old hag, more hog'd‡ in the back nor the *Billy*§ herself. She 'd a wort on her cheek as big as a topmast-stay-mouse, and her hide altogether was as tough and as tanned as the top of a gaff-taule boot. Then she 'd a daughter; the dientical build as herself, but rather more bluff in the bows, and flat on the floor—A niece, too; onc o' your creole-built craft, with a counter as clean as a clipper, and just as much breadth on the beam as to make her stand up to her sticks:—and, to clinch the conarn, we 'd a crazy old craft, as they used to call nurse; more shrivelled in the

* In this sense, applied as a glass of grog.

† Nautice—broken backed.

‡ The *Royal William*, many years guard-ship at Spithead.

face nor a fisherman's fingers—'sides a two-fisted *she*-sawant-maid, as could wap any chap in the ship.

"Well, you know, as soon as the mop was put out o' commission,* and we crosses the line, and gets in the trades—there was tarn the tables—for, 'stead of grunting and groaning below, there was nothing but dining, and dancing, and Bobs-a-dying on deck from daylight till dark. 'There was the goggle-eyed daughter a blowing the Gram-pus† with the platter-faced planter, whenever he caulked upon deck;‡—while t'other, you know,—the good natured chap, was chasing the creole from stem to stern, and running all sorts o' rigs to weather her wake. Well, then, we 'd Sangaree-Jack, as we called him, as was either swigging away, or practizeing his pops at a mark—while his wizen-old-wife, was axing more questions about the course, and compass, and wind, and weather, and what-not, in a watch, nor would fill a battle-ship's log in a twelve-month : for, you see, she was one o' your long-headed hags—one o' your larned, you know : why, bless your heart, she 'd make you believe an eel was a reg'lar built serpent, and a crab nothing more nor a spider—and as for your speriments ; salt-water-Jack was a fool to her. Why the first-mate used to swear—one Moore, a young fellow from Shields—the best tempered chap in the world—he'd work a craft through the eye of a needle—well, *he* used to swear—aye, often and often,—she 'd still rum out o' backy, or bring a red-herring to life when she liked.

"Well, howsomever, we 'd this sort o' work for more nor a week—when—let's see—'t was exactly the 20th of March, aye, the 20th of March (for I'll mind it as long as I live), when just as the skipper was shooting the sun,§ and the ship no more, by our reck'ning, nor fifty-four leagues from the land, (the north-end o' Jamaica, you know,) who should come aft but old Sangaree-Jack, with a gun in his fist (for, you see, we 'd a bit of a breeze at the time), to slap at a couple o' Carey's||

* Sea-sickness over.

† A practical joke—throwing a bucket of water upon a person when sleeping on deck.

‡ Sleeping on deck.

§ Shooting the Sun---taking an observation.

|| Mother Carey's chickens.

as was dodging about; and dipping their wings in the wake o' the ship, the most o' the morn. Well, as soon as we seed what old bald-head was up to; aft, flies the skipper, forgetting the sun, and singing out like a soger—'Stand-fast your fire—stand fast, you infarnal old fool!'—(for the skipper, you see, was one o' your reg'lar-built, upright-downright chaps, as never cared nothing for no one,)—D 'ye know *what* you 're a-doing, you lubberly lobster,' says he,—'d 'ye know what you 're a-doing?' 'Doing?' says Sangaree-Jack, '*you'll* see,' says he, 'in a crack;' when slap he fires, and *unfortun'ly* brings down the nearest bird!

"Well, a child might 'ave levelled the skipper! I never sced such a change in a man. He tarned for awhile as pale as a sheet; and it wasn't that he wanted for pluck,—for you see, as soon as he came to himself a bit,—if it hadn't been for the mate, he 'd-a made the old buffer jump overboard—aye, and moreover, he floored one of the planters, for 'tempting to take the part of the soger. But the worst was, the way they made *light* o' the matter. 'Why don't you lower down the boat,' says Sangaree-Jack, as unconcerned, aye, as a judge passing sentence o' death. 'Why, don't you pick up the bird,' says he. 'Pick up the devil!' says Bob, 'what an't you already done *mischief* enough? It would sarve ye,' says Bob, 'no more nor you ought to be sarv'd; to tarn to, and tar-and-feather you, and tow you astarn on a grating for the rest o' the flock to feed on your ricketty carcass.'—'So it *would*,' says the skipper. 'But never mind, Mister Moore,' says he,—clap it *all* in the log. They shall *know* it at Lloyd's! or I'm d——d!' says he, shaking his fist at the soger; 'but if any thing happens to the ship, I'll bring it all on your lubberly back! and what's more—the underwriters shall stop it out o' your pay.'

"Well, you know, there was the devil to pay and no pitch hot—for the women, you see, must put in their oar. There was the old-un, begging and praying to come to no words; as *she* was the cause on it all. 'T was *I*,' says she, 'as axed the curnel, to kill me the bird to stuff.' 'Stuff h——,' says the skipper—'an't you *stuffing* your body from morn till night?' 'My body? ye monster!

says she, (for I minds every word, just as well as I hard it this minute)—‘Why, ye brute,’ says she, ‘’t was the bird’s as I wanted to stuff;’ for you see, she was in one o’ your speriment fits the whole o’ the morn.

“Well, you know, after a breeze,—in course there comes a bit of a lull—still, there were more black, nor bright looks on deck, the most o’ the day. The skipper wouldn’t dine in the cabin—no, not he, nor break biscuit; nor drink a drop the whole a’ternoon. No one could get him below—there he walkt the deck, passing the passengers on opposite tacks. Sometimes speaking to himself—sometimes biting his nails, sometimes taking the quid out of his mouth, and heaving it far to leeward, like a man as was vexed. Then he’d slap his thigh, or clinch his fist: again he’d look to wind’ard, and shake his head—then look aloft, and drop it again with his eyes fairly rivetted into the deck.—There wasn’t a man in the ship but thought he was mazed.

“Though we’d a fine breeze, with every thing on her, low and aloft; I’m blessed, afore dark, if he didn’t shorten-sail to close-reefed-taacles and foresail; and only for Bob Moore, I’m sartain he’d a sent down the yards, and struck the to’gallant-masts.

“Well, there we were, with a fair wind, and as fine a night as ever was seed on the seas,—going away large, not showing as much canvass as would kiver the ship’s company’s hats. All night long the skipper stays upon deck. D——n the bit, till daylight, he’d budge below. Then when he see’d the sun rise, shining as bright as doubleloon out o’ the mint; and that it was as fine a morn as any o’ your feather-bed birds could wish; up he comes, with a smile on his mug, and says to the mate—‘Moore, my boy,’ says he, ‘crack-on her again—it’s all blown over, I hope!’ ‘Why, I hope so,’ says Bob; ‘but if I was you, Sir,’ says he, ‘I’d now tarn in for a bit of a spell.’ ‘Ah!’ said the skipper, ‘there’s no one needs it more. No tongue can tell the trouble I’ve had on my mind—so here’s take your advice,’ says he, and down he dives.

“Well, you may suppose, where there were no more hands in a watch, than could fairly hoist a to’gallant-sail.

without the help of a handy-Billy;* the standing part o' the morn was pretty well taken up, in letting out reef,—setting studden-sails, and clapping on every rag as would draw. It was six bells afore every thing, low and aloft was trimmed—about the time the cabin-fry used to come upon deck to shake their feathers, and snuff the breeze; and just as old Sangaree-Jack pop'd his pate over the companion-hatch, we feels a thump, (for the ship was going 'twixt eight or nine knots at the time,) as if she'd suddenly struck on a rock. 'What the devil's *that*?' said the mate, flying for'ard, and running out on the bowsprit, to see what it was. 'It must be a wreck!' says he; 'kase, by my reck'ning,' says he, 'we're exactly forty-four leagues from the land;' as much as to say, you know, it couldn't be a *rock*."

"Well, I suppose, 'twas nothing more nor a craft, bottom up," interrupted a top-man, impatient to arrive at the sequel.

"Handsomely! handsomely, bo'!—you'll have it in time.—Well, you know, the ship was brought reg'larly up, all standing—she'd no more way on her, no, nor if she'd been fast by the nose. 'Heave here the *grains*,' says Bob, to one Bill Lawson, a Sunderland lad—a young chap, you know, as never made a West-Ingee vyage afore. 'The *what*?' says Bill.

"'Why, the *grains*, you bur-throated-beast,' says Bob, though he'd a coal in his guzzle himself. 'Do you want the ship to be jammed like Jackson?'

"Well, you know, seeing there was a bit of a breeze 'twixt Bill and the mate, I lets go the wheel, for 't was my trick at the time, gives it to a bit of a boy, and for'ard I flies out on the bow-sprit to Bob. 'Did you ever see such a sight?' says Bob; and no more *never* I did—for there was the whole sarfus o' the sea, for more nor a mile, in one black, moving mass of frisking fins."

"Small helm, Tom," said one of the group.

"It's as true as I'm here," says Tom, endeavouring, by the gravity of his face, and earnestness of his manner, to overcome the incredulity of his staggered auditory.

* Jigger-purchase, a small tackle so designated by seamen:

"They were as thick as mites in a cheese; and spread far and firm enough, to 'ave brought-up the whole channel-fleet; aye, and Billy-Blue to boot, in the *Willy de-Parry*.

"Well, by this time, you know, Bob had lain-out on the spritsail-yard-arm with the grains in his fist. There he was, sitting astride on the stick, for all the world like the pictur-sign you see of Saint George a horse-back, sarving out the dragon with the sargeant's pike. '*I'll make a lane,*' says he, 'or fork a few on 'em, I'll warrant'—and if he didn't, no matter. He killed forty or fifty, afore he knew where he was."

"What! *Beneties*, Tom?" said one of the forecastle-men, with an incredulous leer at his companion.

"Ah, *Beneties*!—what d'ye think o' that now? Why he tumbled them belly-up, faster than he could haul 'em in. The water was coloured with their blood for miles and miles around—the Red Sea was a fool to it.

"Well, in course, *Misses* Sangaree-Jack must be in for the sport—for the curnel bundles below, and turns her out. Up she comes, looking as black as a heavy nor-wester of a winter's night. '*What!*' says she, with a sneer on her snout, and toss of her head, as hove out four of her foremost grinders; for, you see, she could ship and unship her head-rails whenever she liked. Why, in smooth-water weather, you'd see her, battle-ship fashion, showing her two-tier o' teeth,* but come on a cap-full o' wind, there was in muzzles—down ports,—and strike both tier in the hold—pocketed, you know, as close as her purse. 'Well,' says she, as soon as she picked up her snags, as luckily lit in the starboard fore-taucle-haliard tub—'Well,' says she, sputtering out her words, a'ter this sort of fashion, for want of her teeth—'Though it theems to be a thin to thoot a tholitary bird,—yet there appears to be no harm in th'slaughtering fish in *thoals*:' for you see the folksel was kivered with bleeding Beneties, flapping their fins, and tossing their tails, as they gave up the ghost."

Here roars of laughter accompanied Tom's imitation of the lisping lady.

* Line of battle ships are obliged to run in the lower tier of guns, and close those ports, in a fresh breeze.

" 'Exactly, Ma'am,' says Moore, 'kase Bob, you know, was a bit of a scholar; and knew the natur, that 's to say, the law o' the thing, as well as the old woman, with *all* her larning. 'Exactly so, Ma'am,' says he, 'for one's *wilful murder*—and no one, no, not Neptune himself, could bring in the t'other, as either *manslaughter*, or, as the crowner calls it, "*fell i' the-sea*.' "

" Well, you may suppose, *this* silenced the old lady's lip.

" As Bob made a bit of a lane, the ship soon shov'd through the shoal, and run the fish out o' sight. Well, matters went on as pleasant as you please, 'kase the sight of fresh grub gag'd all the growlers. There was the saucy, old Sarah, for all the world, like one o' your Newfoundland-Bankers—fish, fish, fish, scattered all over the deck from stem to stern. There was boil,—there was broil,—there was fry,—there was fritter,—there was staiske,—there was stew,—such stuffing I never seed in my day.

" Well, this all goes off very well, till about two bells, in the a'ternoon-watch; when the man a' the wheel,—one Dick Williams, a Bristol man-born, and a thoro-bred bruiser—(I saw him once sarve-out a press-gang in capital style)—well, just as the bell strikes two, down he drops, in one o' your staggering-bob-fits, with his head in the binnacle box. This passes for nothing, you know, at the time; so there was no more to do, nor hand him below, and bundle him into his sack.*

" Well, nothing happens for more nor an hour. They'd nearly done dinner below in the cabin; when, looking over the taffel—(for the wind was right aft at the time)—the mate observes a precious lot of dirt and grease—a gathering astarn. 'This won't *do*,' says Bob, and down he brushes below to the skipper. 'We must shorten sail, Sir,' says he, 'for it 's looking,' says he—'I axes your pardon, ladies,'—for, you see, Bob was a bit of a *ladies'* man,—'but it 's looking,' says he, 'as black as—blazes astarn.' 'In with the royals and reef,' says the skipper, tossing off the grog in his glass; and he and old Sengaree-Jack tumbling up from below, after Bob.

" Well, you know, the skipper gets scarcely on deck,

* Hammock.

afore this infarnal squall—for it followed us fuster nor Bob expected—catches the ship—carries away our studden-sail-booms, and snaps slap in the slings, the main tausele, and to-gallant-yards. There was Bob, letting run here, and hauling down there; while the skipper was bellowing and bawling more like a new-made boson, nor a master o' a marchanman—though no wonder to be sure, for this here bird business turned his brain. 'Up from below,' says he, 'you skulking sons of ——, up from below, you lubberly beggars! and save your owner's sails and spars.'

"Well, out o' fourteen hands, only *four* comes up from below. Two crawls for'ard as well as their pins could carry them,—but 'a fore the first on 'em fetches as far as the win'less—down he drops as stiff as a midshipman; and brings up t'other right on the top on him!—But bless you,—this was a trifle to the two as tried to come *ast*—they 'd a frightened the devil himself. There they were, first sheering to port—then staggering to starboard—their eyes starting out o' their sockets—froth foaming out o' their mouths—and every hair on their heads as stiff and as straight as a rope-maker's hackle. Well,—a'ter making a stand for a while, and a set, like one o' your Senegal tigers, at Sangaree-Jack—they both gives a groan as would 'ave rent the heart of a hangman, and falls on their faces flat at his feet!—'See what you 've done!—see what you 've done! you d——d old scoundrel!' said the skipper, to Sangaree-Jack. 'See *here*,' says he, as he haul'd one o' the poor fellows out o' the gangway, and laid him aside in the water-ways. 'Down below, *dive*!' says he,—'damme, dive, and send all your infarnal fry up to clew down the sails.' Well, up comes the women, screaming and squalling. Such a nitty never was known, 'Oh, Captain!—Oh, *Mister Mate*!—*Dear Mister Moore*!' says Sangaree's wife—coming blarney over Bob, in one of her feckshunate fits—for, you see, she was one o' your sort as are always d——d fond of a fellow whenever afeard—'Dear, dear, *Mister Moore*,' says she, 'is there nothing, nothing can save us?'—'*No-thing*, Ma'am!' says Bob, 'unless *you*, and the ladies jump for'ard, and clap-on the tausele clewlines.'

"Well, though you may fancy 't was no laughing matter,—when four fine young fellows were laid stretched upon deck,—still, I 'm blessed, but, 't would 'ave made a sick monkey clap on a grin, to've seen the petticoats trying to find their way for'ard to the tangle-clewlines. Howsomer, poor souls!—they didn't fetch far—for afore they gets to the chestree, down drops the old woman and her daughter!

"Well, you know, 't was bad enough afore—But now 't was all *up* with us—for I don't know how it is,—but somehow or other, a fellow 's never himself when he sees a woman in any sort o' distress, much more a-dying on deck; so by Bob running here—myself there—and the skipper every where, to sarve out assistance,—I 'm blowed if the ship did'n't broach to,—and slap the three topmasts goes over the side.

"Howsomer, to shorten the yarn,—there wasn't a soul in the ship, save Bob, Sangaree's niece, (the creole you know,) and in course Pill Garlick, but kick'd the bucket—dropped down as dead as herrings afore the first dog-watch was out——"

"Well, and how came you *three* to cheat the devil of his due?" asked another inquisitive topman.

"Why, you see, both Bob and myself bowsed-up our gib-stays abit the night afore; and in course, as our coppers were burning hot the whole o' the day, the little appetite the pair on us had, was all for the drink. And yet, your know-nothing sanctificators are always a-telling you that *drink* 's the death of a man!—Now here, you know, 't was the *saving* o' we ——"

"Well, in course the young lady *too* was groggy?" interrogated Toggle.

"Why, she never said nothing o' *that*—but she told us, she never tasted as much as a morcel o' the fish—for,' says, she, 'I thought it too strong for my stomach.'

"Well, you may suppose, we were now in a terrible mess—three topmasts over the side—blowing blunderbusses—raining bullets—the sky all a-fire with fast flashing lightning—the sea foaming froth, like a washerwoman's tub—the deck scattered over with corpses—and

only Bob, myself, and this here young lady, left to man and manage the unfort'net barky.

"Well, this sort o' weather lasts till sunset—When, says I to myself, let's see how she sets. There she dips in a low, black bank, as pale and watery, aye,—as a widow in her weeds.

"Well, there was nothing for us, you know but to lash the helm a-lee, till we sees what sort o' turn things 'ould take. It was all very well till the dark sets in—that tried our pluck. I think I now sees Bob and myself with this here Miss---Miss Clem---Clem—what the devil was her name? I know 't was as long as the main-to'bowlin; but no matter; I'll mind another time. I think I just sees the pair on us, with the girl atwixt us, shivering and shaking, like the sails of a craft in stays—all holding-on by the bulwark,—and, every now and again, the unfort'net lass, clinging like a cat to one or t'other of us, as the lightning flashed in her father's phiz—for you see, he lay face up, just where he first dropt abreast o' the binnacle.

"Not as much, no, as a look, much more a word, passes betwixt us, for four or five hours. At last, about two bells in the middle watch, as we reckoned it—(for Bob was *even* afeard to look at his watch) the lightning stops, and down again comes the heaviest fall o' rain as ever was seed since the flood—Every drop was as big as a two-pound shot!—it lulls the wind, and levels the sea as flat as a pancake. In less than an hour, there wasn't a breath out o' the heavens; and the sea was as smooth and as glassy, aye, as a sheet of fresh water ice.

"Still not as much as a mutter was moaned. For three hours or more, Bob's eyes were fixed like a ferret, on one dientical spot on the deck: and the three on us kept in our breath, for all the world, like so many fellows trying to float on the water. Well, in this sort o' way, we stays clustered together till the grey o' the morn:—when just as much light breaks in the east'ard, as a body might read the compass-card by: Bob, for the first time looking aloft, gives a start as fairly frightened the girl into fits. 'See *here*!' says he, singing out like a soger, and seizing me fast by the shoulder—'look up—look up—there *they* are—there *they* are! right overhead.' Well, though

it isn't a trifle as would startle Tom, I'm blessed if I could bring myself, for four or five minutes, to lift as much as a lid; 'kase, you know, 'twas no pleasant thing to be looking aloft, when the decks below were kivered with dead:—How did I know, but 't was some o' their souls steering for Fidler's Green!—At last Bob lays hold o' my flipper, and lugs me clean out in the middle o' the deck. 'Don't be afeard,' says he, 'it's *all* right. The've had their revenge—and now, ten to one, they'll tarn the tables.' Well, I looks up at last,—and what d' ye think does I see?"

"Why old Sangaree's ghost, I suppose," said one of his most credulous auditors.

"No, but a flock," continued the narrator, "and I vearli believe, of the same dientical careys, as unfortunately, old Sangaree shot the bird from.

"Well—'Now, Miss,' says Bob, trying to cheer up the creole—'Now, Miss,' says he, 'lend us a fist, and we'll tarn too with a will, and clear away the wreck.'

"Well, there was cut away here, and slash away there. Hard a weather the helm—ast both fore-sheets—(for a beautiful breeze springs up with the birds)—clear the decks o' the dead—(and to shorten the yarn, afore the watch is relieved)—eight-and-forty hours wasn't over our heads, till the barky was brought up in safety abreast of the Twelve Apostles in Port Royal Harbour. What d' ye think *now* of sailing o' a Friday?" exclaimed this attestor of miracles: who, having first eyed the group like an inquisitor in quest of unbelievers in vain, turned his back on the watch, singing—

"My name it is Tom Tough,
I've seen a little survice—"

"Tough enough at a yarn," whispered our old friend the linguist.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CHANNEL GROPING.

Cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd,
 Some days and nights chaps'd before that he
 Could altogether call the past to mind ;
 And when he did, he found himself at sea.

BRAUN.

THE anticipations of the officers and crew were abundantly fulfilled in the dulness and dearth of any subject for excitement, which characterized their continuance on this station—for with the exception of homeward-bound merchantmen, and an occasional rencontre with pilot-boats on the look-out for ships up-channel, the month of September and a few days of October, were passed over in one unvarying sameness of prospect and duty, alike weary to the eye and the animal spirits. Indeed, at the best of times, this station was never remarkable for affording a wider field for the enterprise of a cruizer, than in casual recapture ; or what was yet a less frequent, as well as a much more difficult task—the entrapping of some skulking privateer, or little lugger-rigged fox, protected from the consequences of his prowling by the facility of earthing himself, when hard pushed, in an enemy's port in the vicinity.

The first week in October was not concluded, ere a cutter, dispatched from Plymouth, arrived on the station with “fresh orders” for Stauch ; and the boat's crew which conveyed the bearer of these instructions on board the *Spitfire*, communicated, *vis à voce*, a piece of intelligence, relative to an Order in Council issued by the British Government, which, from its welcome nature, was hardly announced, ere it flew through the brig like wildfire. That Order in Council had been the result of a policy, as sound as it was just ; and it is only to be regretted it had been so lately acted on : since the principles as well as the ne-

cessity of prompt interference in crippling those resources of our active enemy—the French Emperor—which consisted in a fraudulent trade, carried on under the American flag, to cover enemy's property, and defeat the rights of a belligerent, had so long previously been detected, and distinctly pointed out, by statesmen in this country, more than ordinarily conversant with the laws of nations.

The intelligence, thus conveyed, appeared at first, to be too much in unison with their anxious wishes, and was deemed to be of too gratifying a nature to be true: and the announcement of a system, which, from a first impression, might be considered as authorizing a war on American property, was treated as unauthenticated rumour; or, as sailors term it, '*a galley packet*.' All doubts were, however, subsequently cleared up on the subject, by the effect of the receipt of the instructions themselves upon their commander's spirits and reanimated countenance.

The lieutenant commanding the cutter was beset by all the officers of the *Spitfire*; and doomed to endure a series of questions on every topic, from the ordinary news of the day, and common-place inquiries after friends in port, to that which was uppermost in the thoughts of all:—namely, the increased probability of making prize-money on the station newly assigned them.—A confused *mélée* of debate and of biddings took place among the officers round the capstern.—For, on these occasions, the spirit of speculation, so inherent in man, and nurtured from being pent up and confined for a period, burst out with redoubled energy; and proposals were made by several, to dispose of their scrip or stock in the Bank of Hope, or, to be more explicit, their share of prize-money. Some put up for sale their share for the first week after arriving at their future destination, which was now discovered to be, off the port of L'Orient, in the Bay of Biscay. Others solicited a bidding for the produce of a month's cruize; while the master and purser, having laid their heads together, resolved, like good judges, and men of the world, to risk nothing, and neither sell nor buy. Nor was this spirit of speculation confined to the officers alone. The mania seized the carpenter, gunner, boatswain, mates, and midshipmen.—The prospect of gain, by buying, was altogether proble-

matical ; while that arising from sale was capable of being rendered a certainty by confidently asking enough. This may account for the disparity between the numbers of candidate buyers and sellers, the latter of whom were most numerous. And even the *Jacks* themselves, however unacquainted with the doctrine of chances, or the value of life-interest, or interest for long or short periods, were found freely sporting the only commodity which they had to speculate on with their shipmates—to wit, their grog.

Hasty offered a '*Quarterly Bill*,' for the chance of Burton's share during the first fortnight : an offer which might be considered very liberal ; but which, contrary to his expectation, was refused. The secret was, that he had powerful reasons to woo Fortune by every possible means, rather than sport with her possible munificence for so trifling a consideration as three months' pay : having known some instances within his own experience, of officers whose temerity in speculations of this nature, had given occasion to many fruitless regrets in after life. Had it been a matter of barter with another officer similarly engaged in active service in another ship, and with equally good prospects of prize-money, perhaps, like others in the profession, he would not have declined entering into an engagement to share reciprocally ; because he would in that case be remunerated for the apparent sacrifice made by the additional chance thus given.

But we have thus long kept the real reason out of sight, in order to afford the reader that which is very cruel in a writer to refuse ; namely, the pleasure of indulging in conjecture. Doubtless it has been anticipated. Burton had retired below, and was busily engaged in pouring out his soul on a sheet of paper.

The surgeon, who, from being an Irishman, had a natural predilection for speculation, and every thing pregnant with a wager, appeared all in a fret lest Hasty's ardour should cool, and exclaimed, with an eagerness calculated to defeat itself,

"Oh, by the powers ! it's myself that will take your offer."

"Avast there, doctor," said Hasty, seeing how quickly

this son of Esculapius caught at the bait ; "you're not going to bleed me in *that* way, my boy."

"In what way ? Sure isn't it all a lottery ?"

"An Irish lottery, perhaps ?"

"Oh, come now, aisy with your nationalities ; I lay you a gallon of the rale Ineshoan whisky, that you won't find a freer man at a bet from the Currah o' Kildare to Doncaster, than an Irishman. And mind, Mister York, I never saw one o' your country that wouldn't handicap his own breeches, barring he had nothing else to stake."

"Well," said Hasty, with a laugh, "I confess it's almost hang-choice, especially if a horse is concerned."

"Aye, faith—a horse and a halter is the proverb—and it's yourself ought to know your own wake side."

"Well, you're not going to weather on my weak side. I'm York enough to know the difference between a commissioned and a warrant officer's share."

With spirits of so speculative a turn, it requires no great stretch of foresight to divine that an accommodation was effected with little difficulty ; and being a "free halter," as he avowed all his countrymen were, the surgeon soon acquiesced in terms wherein the Yorkshireman had the best of the bargain.

The fore-castle, from its being thickly crowded, and the busy hum of many voices vying with each other in their biddings, might not be considered an inapt representation of the "Rotunda," in the Bank of England, or that formidable and fickle arbiter of Fortune, "Change-Alley." Gold was not the object uppermost in the mind of the thorough-bred tar ; and they were so frequently sellers, that they could hardly be accommodated with any thing like an offer from the marines and afterguard, who were gifted with more shore-going prudence. A present drop in the bottle, like a bird in the hand, had irresistible charms for those who might be said to live from day to day, regardless of the future.

"Here's my prize money for the cruize going for a week's allowance o' grog," cried 'Twisting Tom,' jumping down the fore-ladder ; and finishing the sentence when he landed on the lower deck, and thought himself out of hearing of the officers.

"Here's *mine*, too, for the same," said one of the fore-topmen. "Hang it, a fellow might lose the number of his mess afore he gets out o' the hands of the gallows agents."

"You may say *that*, bo," said a third: "why I'd more nor, aye, seventy pounds coming to me when I belonged to the *Le Lore*; and it was so long a heaving in sight, I gave it up for a bad job, and was obligated, at last, to sell it to a Jew on the Hard, for a suit of mustering rigging, a thundering old turnip,* and a bladder of gin."

The greater part, however, were in a state of high exhilaration at the prospect of more active and beneficial occupation. A station like that off *L'Orient* was, under the present circumstances, certain to ensure their falling in with the trade then carrying on in French property under the protection of the American flag. The most daring attempts were every day made to enter French ports under blockade, by American fast-sailing merchantmen, denominated, from their invariable habit of 'running' for a port, "Runners." And, to the credit of republican principles, it may be admitted that, in thus exposing themselves to capture, and, at least, detention, there was a display of patriotic feeling, as much as self-interested motive. The object of their government was obviously to defeat the policy then pursued by Britain: so far it would appear that, as American citizens, they were determined *generously* to contribute to this object by some sacrifices, and at great risk; yet those who understand the secret of human motive will, perhaps, attribute this recklessness on the part of the Transatlantic tars to more powerful inducements—the certainty of a market, and the enormous prices to be obtained for their merchandise in the event of succeeding. Indeed, in this respect, they had precisely a similarly strong motive for 'risking the run' as the smuggler; for they had accurately ascertained, by computation, that in the event of *one* ship in three breaking the blockade, the proceeds would sufficiently remunerate the parties concerned in this description of hazardous enterprise. From all these considerations.

* A watch.

therefore, the Bay of Biscay was considered by adepts in "sea-attorneyship," (to use Lord Byron's expressive phrase,) as the most desirable cruising ground a British man-of-war could possibly occupy ; and hence an appointment to this station was sought after with extreme avidity, and throughout every channel of interest, by every ambitious and active officer.

While the letter-bag was making up, and epistles inditing, in person or by proxy, the commander of the cutter was invited below to partake of the best fare the captain's table afforded ; and after the two superiors had quaffed a glass to their mutual success, the visitor betook himself to his boat and returned on board.

The wind had been in a point which barely allowed the brig to 'lay her course ;' yet such was Staunch's anxiety to reach his appointed station, that hardly had his visitor descended the side ere, pursuant to previous orders, the *Spitfire* was seen under a crowd of canvass close-hauled upon a wind—displaying her pennant and ensign at the peak, until the token of salutation upon parting company was returned by the lively cutter, which now bore away large up channel.

Before the evening set in, or the ship's company had supped (for the seamen of our service, following the prejudices of the ancients, always sup long before our fashionables dine), several indications were discoverable to the experienced eye, of approaching bad weather. The sun was sinking pale and watery in the west—the slanting ray which shot across the vapoury mist that only partially covered its orb, assumed the appearance of a waterspout, falling in an oblique direction on the darkening deep. Black and heavy clouds were observed accumulating in the horizon ahead of the ship's course—the undulating motion of the longer and steadier swells now yielded to a quicker succession of shorter seas, whose curling heads topped high and burst heavily in briny foam. Porpoises, the never failing indication to the seamen of change of wind or hard weather, were seen rolling in the direction of the wind, and wantonly revelling alongside, as if mocking the slow progress of the labouring vessel, which had now 'broken off' four or five points from her course.

That ardour and excitement, lately so strongly manifested by all on board, appeared gradually to subside on the approach of bad weather. These unpropitious appearances, with the wind backing round in an adverse direction, just as they were about to proceed to a new destination, were considered by the sailors as peculiarly ominous; and their sanguine expectations of prize money seemed all to have vanished like a vision. The joke, the friendly banter, the jovial laugh, which, within the last few hours, had enlivened the lower-deck, was soon superseded by silent reserve and sullen gloom. Yet, let not the novice hastily conclude that this transition from delightful anticipations to their opposite, was occasioned by any apprehensions for their personal safety. An experienced cruizer has long made up his mind to these things, as matters of course; and if, previously to that intelligence which had so far excited their hopes, it had come on to blow a hurricane, it would have been regarded, as an ordinary occurrence, with perfect indifference, so long as the vessel had 'sea room,' and plenty of 'drift' in which to lay to. The secret source of their uneasiness and of their dissatisfaction, for it partook of both, will be best understood from the tenor of a little gallery debate, which now took place on the 'tween decks.

"Well," said the captain of the fore-castle, as he jumped down the fore-ladder, and chucked his little tarpaulin hat under the mess-table,—“I doesn't know what to make o' this here.

"Of what?" said his messmate.

"Why this here breeze, backing round against the sun. I doesn't like the look on it at all."

"I don-know who would. Them there hog-back'd varments never come larking about a ship for nothing."

"Oh, blow the pauposes! But, bless your heart, what else can you expect?"

"Expect!—why?"

"Why?—why, are you such a blind buzzard as not to know the cause on it all?"

"I 'm grog'd if I does."

"Then you ought to be grog'd—it's plain enough to any one with half an eye. How a sensible man like he.

aye, and a thoro'-bred seaman, too—for there's never a better, I take it, from stem to stern—a fellow, too, as has always a weather eye open—how the likes o' he could ever *think* o' such a thing, is a regular-built pauler to Tom Toggie!"

"What, Tom? what?"

"*What?*—Why, sailing of a *Friday*, to be sure."

"Oh, *there* you are!—are you? You're right enough there—aye, aye—I wish the skipper only had the yarn *Twisting Tom* spun on the folksle, the night we sailed, about the bad luck of starting, or breaking ground *at all* on a Friday."

Here the Nestor of the crew, with a look of profound wisdom, interposed his sage advice, avowing—"If *I* was the captain, blow me if I wouldn't bear up for port again, and start fair a fresh. There's never no good comes of such 'speriments."

Far be it from us, in this age of philosophical anchor-smiths, and geometrical toll-gate keepers, to defend prognostications which accord so little with the enlarged spirit of the times. But the remark is too trite, that 'we are creatures of circumstances'—and it is too much to expect that men who have been ambitiously nursed in principles which have raised this country to an envied eminence among nations, are to be whisked about by every wind of new-fangled doctrine. As well might the leopard be expected to change his spots, or the hyena his indomitable spirit, as the legitimate sons of the ocean strike their flag to philosophy; and admit themselves in error upon a point settled by the experience of sea-going folk for centuries past. Certain it is—this prejudice, if prejudice it be, is a hydra of many heads; and is felt in the most ordinary occurrences, on shore as well as afloat. Nor would it perhaps be desirable in this, any more than other instances of popular predilection, that the bias of the uninformed mind to fatalism should be rashly invaded; which, in the British seaman, as well as the Mahomedan soldier, is so often the only rallying cry of heroic devotedness, and patriotic desperation.

In consequence of the stormy indications now but too perceptible, the sails had been reefed, and the vessel made

snug for the night. As it is customary in some 'crack ships,' for the warrant officers to examine the rigging aloft, in the evening as well as the morning, to see that no part of it chafes, or is liable to injury; the gunner, in the performance of this duty, was laying out on the lee main yard-arm, and in over-reaching himself, he unfortunately fell from his elevated situation, clear 'over-all' into the sea. The announcement of this catastrophe soon reached, with electric effect, the little parliament between decks, and shortened the debate without coming to a division on the question.

"A man overboard!—A man overboard!" was caught and reiterated by twenty voices in a breath.

"There it is!—Didn't I tell you," said Toggle. "You'll have *more* of it yet."

"Ay, it's only beginning," said another, as he knocked down poor Tom, in his generous hurry to assist a ship-mate.

A scene of confusion and anxious alarm here ensued, which it is impossible to conceive, much more describe. Tompion was a general favourite. Had it been otherwise, the cry of "a man overboard" is sure to harrow up the feelings of every being in the ship. In the scramble to get upon deck, the crossed-ladders in the hatchways were choked; and their eagerness to get up, only proved the means of detaining them longer below. The more light and nimble lads caught hold of the combings, and swinging themselves up by their arms, fell sprawling on all fours, into the 'lee-scuppers.' Some ran aft to lower the jolly-boat. Others flung, with all their united force, towards the direction where the man was seen, a grating which was destined never to reach him. The life-buoy was cut away, the carpenter's bench thrown overboard; while the master, who was officer of the watch, gave the sharp word 'to haul up the courses, and heave the main-topsail aback,' to arrest the ship in her progress. The hurry and agitation of all tended, in part, to defeat their object; nor could it yet be inferred that this was any imputation on the discipline of the ship, as every thing was done on the spur of a moment, too pregnant with fear, sympathy, and solicitude, not to afford abundant pretext

for spontaneous and unbidden alacrity. In consequence of the foremast tackle being untimely let go, the jolly-boat was swamped under the stern, and before there was time to hoist the cutter off the booms, the man was observed sinking without a possible chance of relief, as he was unable to avail himself of the assistance of the grating, life-buoy, or boat's-oars, thrown overboard. There was enough of light on the water, despite of the gloom of the evening, to render the hopeless features of the man distinguishable to Brace, the boatswain; his partner in many a youthful freak, both having entered the service together. Roused from stupifying horror by an imploring glance from his messmate, the latter shouted in anguish—"By Heavens, Tom! I can't bear that look, I'll save you, or go with you."* Nor was it long ere this awful pledge of friendship was redeemed, for in an instant throwing off his looser attire, he plunged amid the waves, through which he cut his way to the sinking man. Aware of the danger of thrusting himself within that grasp, which is known never to relax but with life, he cautiously, though firmly, seized him by the collar with his left hand, turning the gunner thus on his back, as the most favourable position for floating; while, 'treading the water,' as it is termed, Brace supported his exhausted companion's head above the unfriendly element, and kindly cheered him with assurances of his safety. Nor was the sympathy of the crew suffered to waste itself in unavailing regrets, or in mere admiration of their brave shipmate: the cutter had been 'hoist out,' and manned by eager hands, who pulled with inconceivable alacrity to their rescue; and in a few minutes this scene of painful excitement on board was happily changed for that of heartfelt and general congratulation.

* Were it necessary to quote a case, in order to prove that we do not deal in the marvellous, or sport with the feelings of the reader, we might appeal to the experience of some of the officers of the *Barfleur*, for an authentication of an anecdote relative to two seamen on board that ship, resembling the above stated in most of its details.

CHAPTER XXV.

A CONFLAGRATION.

E'en now the devastation is begun,
And half the business of destruction done.

GOLDSMITH.

DURING several days which elapsed since parting with the cutter, nothing of importance occurred on board the *Spitfire*, which had been beating up against a strong adverse breeze, occasionally under close-reefed topsails and courses. The wind and sea had considerably abated ; when Staunch, anxious to reach his cruising ground as soon as possible, just previously to piping to dinner, thus addressed the master—

“Come, Stowel!—with this wind we shall never get hold of a Yankee runner, unless we clap sail on the brig, and beat her across the Bay.”*

“Why, no, Sir, we shall not make mooch of it rowling in the trough of the sea, like a gull with a wowed wing—she wants more sail to steady her—more spars are sprung by a weather lurch, than fifty lee ones.”

“To be sure, Stowel! that can be easily accounted for—one occasions something of a steady strain, while the other, in consequence of the sea receding from the weather bilge of the vessel, brings up every thing with a sudden surge.”

This little council of war terminated like many greater ; where, not unfrequently, a vast deal of trouble is taken, in sounding the opinion of others, to afford a colourable pretext for following the opinion of the principal. Nor is this permission to the inferior to sport an opinion either impolitic, or prejudicial to the service ; as long as there is any truth in the adage, that men would rather prefer being led than driven.

“Come, Hasty,” said Staunch, looking to windward, and then aloft—“Come,—turn the hands up, make sail.

* Bay of Biscay.

Shake two reefs out o' the taupsels—cross the to'gallant-yards, and set the sails."

Busied in this duty, the whole ship's company had deserted the 'tween decks, and were occupied on deck and aloft, with the exception of our old friend the linguist, whose attention to duty, from being on the doctor's list, was dispensed with. Poring over the pages of an old 'Porney's French Grammar,' a present from Burton; his incubrations were interrupted by the unseasonable susceptibility of his olfactory nerve. 'Puzzled as usual in the pronouns' this intimation of that vigilant sense would perhaps have been unnoticed, had not the impulse been repeated again and again; when, like a man thoroughly awakened from a dream, he started on his feet, at seeing a smoke oozing from the crevices of a locker, on the lee side of the lower deck, a few feet abaft the foremast. Flinging down the book, he with a precipitancy so common in cases of imminent alarm, was about to exclaim aloud "Fire!" when, recollecting the regulations of the ship, he repressed his breath, and quickly repaired to the quarter-deck, where he announced his apprehensions to his commander in a low tone of voice. Without exchanging a word with any but the quarter-master, on whose mind the necessity for silence was impressed by the captain's significant and anxious gesture; Staunch descended with alacrity below to ascertain how far these suspicions were founded.

The dark, dingy smoke which now began to pervade the deck, left no doubt in the captain's mind as to the correctness of the seaman's suspicions.

The topsails had been hoisted, and the top-gallant yards just "swayed across," with about twenty of the crew aloft, when returning upon deck without betraying any thing like perturbation, Staunch directed the drummer to beat the "Fire-roll."

On board many ships, even some of those most highly disciplined in the service, an alarm of fire would have created general consternation, and the worst consequences might have been anticipated, from the embarrassing, and appalling confusion which would probably ensue. But numerous provisions had been made by the

Captain of the *Spitfire*, to counteract the often too fatal effects of an alarm, which has a tendency to dissolve discipline, set obedience at defiance, and unman the stoutest heart. He had formerly served in a ship of the line, a number of whose crew, in consequence of a sudden cry of fire, had, in their alarm, jumped overboard; although the ship was moored within a few cables' length of the dock-yard, from whence they were certain of immediate succour, independently of that which was sure to be afforded by the boats of all the men-of-war in the port. He knew that in such cases much depended upon the officer of the watch at the time, whose prudence or activity might often render the consequences less calamitous, if not altogether prevent the catastrophe. Stimulated by regrets and reflections of this nature, his active mind, even while a junior, had devised many expedients and precautions, for increasing the chances of saving the lives of the crew, or preserving the ship herself, in case of a fire at sea. His love for the service, and his really humane disposition, induced him, the moment he found himself in command, to reduce these reflections to practice: and he had not been long appointed to the *Spitfire*, ere he laid the foundation of a system, by the introduction of what he termed a '*Fire Bill*,' by which every individual 'borne on the books,' in the event of fire, whether at sea or in port, was stationed to some specific duty, the moment the alarm roll was beaten. And in these duties his crew was instructed, and occasionally exercised in the same manner as they were wont at their guns, and various evolutions aloft.

The roll of drum was no sooner heard than the crew, startled by the unwelcome sound, were for a moment arrested in the performance of their duty, remaining stationary in the tops and various parts of the rigging.

The emotion occasioned by the dreaded drum soon subsided; and the men, turning their eyes to their commander, seemed to derive encouragement from, and be actuated by the same cool intrepidity, which characterized the conduct of their brave superior; whose humane and keen sensibility to the imminent peril of all committed to his charge, was neither discernible in his look or demeanour. That

he had wrought himself up for all the emergencies of the occasion was apparent, from the fixedness of his posture, high port, and commanding aspect. Firm and immovable, as if prepared to "brave the arrows of outrageous fortune," he still felt, that let prudence devise, or boldness achieve what means they might for their salvation, almost every thing depended on the subordination and discipline of the crew in this trying hour. His anxiety soon gave place to a confident contemplation, that much of the difficulties of his situation were removed by the ready obedience displayed to the prescribed regulations. Deliberately, and with comparative little bustle, the men were observed repairing to their respective stations, eager to perform the duties therewith connected.

Some were seen "rigging the pumps," others drawing water through the port-holes, and flooding the decks from stem to stern. Here a few hands were clearing the boats on the booms, "tracing up the stay," and rounding down the "yard-tackle-falls,"* preparatory to hoisting them out. Now a division of marines were seen tumbling off the booms the captain's cumbrous and heavy pressed hay-bags, and shouldering them over the side: while others were unstowing the ship's company's hammocks from the nettings, and soaking them in the rolling mass of water now accumulated on deck; which, agitated by the ship's motion, as she mounted the wave, or descended into the trough of the sea, revolved along her deck, or broke in splashes against her sides. Thus, thoroughly soaked and wetted in salt water, these sacks were passed down the hatchways, as fire dampers, to a few of the petty officers below on the "tween decks." In the hope of excluding air, and thereby preventing an extension of the fire abaft—this party had nearly succeeded in building, with these we hammocks, a wall or barricade across the lower deck which was only interrupted by the dense suffocating smoke—compelling them very reluctantly to abandon the completion of their enterprise.

* Many of our "yacht-rigged ships" are now seen without "yard-tackle pendants" aloft, which are kept below on deck, to trace up required. We once witnessed the loss of a valuable life by this unnecessary piece of nautical dandyism.

The topmen aloft hauling and 'whipping up,' buckets of water, filled by the 'firemen' below, continued wetting the sails and rigging in every direction. The remaining marines were employed in working the only engine on board,* whilst the pipe was directed by the chief boatswain's mate with as much steadiness and aim, as if occupied in washing round the ship's side when at anchor.

Action is every thing to a sailor ; and it will be found that nothing is more disheartening than permitting him to brood over a disaster. In the bustle and activity of duty, another species of excitement and anxiety originates, calculated to divert his attention from pondering on an uncontrollable calamity, which would only uselessly repress his spirits.

The 'carpenter's crew' were busied above in scuttling the waist in different places, so as more speedily to flood the deck underneath, in the immediate vicinity of the 'bens' or lockers, where the spare sails and combustible stores were stowed.

The mound of wet hammocks, piled on the lower deck, already appeared to check the progress of the flame abaft. Every thing, however, depended upon stifling it forward, and eventually preventing its bursting out through the deck above. This event was momentarily apprehended by the commander ; and from the contiguity of the fire to the pitch and oakum seams of the planks—all composed of American pine—it was only natural such a result must shortly follow.

Perhaps no officer, however his senior in the service, was better acquainted with the character of those whose destiny was confided to his care, or knew better how, by sacrificing to their humour, to kindle their enthusiasm. He was as well aware of the importance of timing things with the tar, as he was that men generally, and sailors in particular, were imitative animals. Whether it arose from these considerations, or that he was impelled by the overpowering influence of the hour, his conviction of the ne-

* In those days, the largest three-decker in the service was only furnished with one fire engine.

cessity there existed for making light of every personal sacrifice was soon made apparent to the seamen. Despite of their proverbial contempt for expense and cost of attire, they were not prepared to see their captain, on finding materials failing for keeping down the fire, suddenly stripping off his coat, and without waiting to loose the epaulettes attached, trampling it in the water till well saturated; and then hurling it, at the risk of suffocation by the thick volume of ascending smoke, down the fore-hatchway on the flames below.

"Hurrah---hurrah---more *swabs*!"* waggishly exclaimed the boatswain, eyeing the epaulettes as they flew past him down the foot of the fore-ladder where he stood, his whole figure blackened with smoke, and reeking with heat and the water that had been cast on him; while almost in the midst of the fire---"Hurrah, my lads! soak and send."

The flames themselves hardly flew faster than the contagion of the captain's example---every man on deck doffed his jacket or Guernsey frock, and soaking it in the water, passed it on to the boatswain---"That's your sort," said he, "heave and awash. Keep her out o' the barracks,† and you'll soon have her under."

The clothing of the seamen, so opportunely converted into fire dampers, had, for some time, a considerable effect in subduing the fury of the flames; but the insidious and destructive element soon burst out with renewed vigour.

The dense, pithy smoke rendered all human endeavours vain to reach the spot, where it raged with irrepressible fury, and made irresistible progress. Several unavailing attempts had been made by the boatswain to direct his dampers with precision, or throw them sufficiently forward, so as to counteract the destructive ravages which the ascending flames were making on the ceiling of the 'tween decks, or under part of the planks and beams of the deck.

The captain, and the three commissioned officers, were for a few minutes observed debating together. "If once,"

* *Swabs*---literally bundles of rope-yarns used for the purpose of drying up the decks. In figurative phrase, epaulettes.

† The marines' mess-place, so designated by the blues.

said Staunch, "the fire burst through the deck, we must bear up to keep the blaze and falling embers from flying aft."

"I don't know *that*, Sir," said Stowel—"fire always creeps to wind'ard."

"Well—bear up, *I'm* determined."

"I agree with *you*, Sir," said Burton—"besides, we've a better chance of falling in with relief by going fast through the water, than in remaining by the wind."

It was now manifest that the ship's company, observing the officers in consultation, began to relax in their exertions; a result which was in an instant perceived by their commander.

"Hasty," said Staunch, "I perceive the men don't like this parley of our's together---they think danger's in the wind---just jump for'ard, you and Stowel, and cheer 'em up."

In this Staunch was actuated by a double motive. He was, above all things, desirous that the spirits of the crew should not be depressed; which he was too well acquainted with the character of the tar not to suspect would be the case, were they to imagine there existed any reason for this secrecy; or, in other words, that the danger was such, that it would be unsafe to communicate to them all its alarming extent. He also was aware that, as a skilful seaman and a man of quickness and resource, Burton was that person whose opinion or advice was more available than that of all the officers in the ship together. "And, Burton," said he, observing that the first lieutenant and master were on the fore part of the deck, and out of hearing,---"I wish to have your opinion as to the prudence of hoisting the boats out, ere we put the ship before the wind."

Burton paused for a moment in a thoughtful mood. "It would be as well, Sir," said he, "to have them out, if—we could be certain it would not have the effect of impressing the men with a greater idea of their danger."

"Hurrah, my lads!--heave quick in the foretop," cried Staunch, endeavouring to direct the people's attention to that quarter, and prevent them drawing any unfavourable conclusion from his close conference with Burton.

"That's the danger which 'tis so desirable to avoid," said Staunch, earnestly resuming his conversation—"however, there's no time to be lost. In a few minutes we shall be *compelled* to decide."

"I foresee it, Sir," said the lieutenant, "and therefore advise you at once to whip 'em out. Besides, a *word* from you, may lull their suspicion of danger."

The captain took the hint. "Mister Brace," cried he, addressing the boatswain---"hands out boats---we may as well get them out o' the way. Firemen and topmen aloft---remain in their stations."

The cool and deliberate tone with which these orders were delivered, was in itself sufficiently reassuring; and the orders seemed rather to originate in a desire to clear the deck for the accommodation of the men, than in the prospect of any immediate necessity for taking to the boats.

The cutter which, as usual, was stowed inside the yawl, was whipped over the side in a second; and a steady hand being put on board to steer her, was veered astern by a strong hawser. The launch, or rather the yawl (for in vessels of this size the latter answers the purpose of the former), was not so easily lifted from her bed on the booms: but after she had, with some difficulty, been raised sufficiently high, previously to clearing the gun-whale, the flames bursting from beneath, and catching the fore-stay tackle fall, she fell forward on the guns, and stove in her bows. A mingled murmur of horror escaped from several simultaneously, in consequence of this disaster, which was as quickly checked by Staunch, exclaiming---"Never mind, lads---never mind, *we* sha'n't want her."

The firm, and even cheerful tone of these consolatory words, seemed to have a soothing effect upon the excited feelings of the anxious crew; who had now renewed their efforts to subdue the flames (which were fast ascending aloft,) with a courage apparently proportioned to the magnitude of the perils with which they had to contend.

The jolly-boat abaft, and the gig on the quarter, had also been lowered down, and dropped astern by a hawser, with a boat keeper in each. This accomplished, the fast consuming vessel was immediately put before the wind; and it now may be said she flew through the one element.

with a rapidity which was only exceeded by that of the subtler flame winning its fiery way through her blazing bulwarks and rigging aloft.

Here Hasty was observed pacing the deck in an anxious, fretful mood, as though labouring under some awful foreboding, suddenly turning to his captain, he exclaimed, as if they had previously been discussing a subject hitherto untouched by either—

“Recollect, Sir, we shan’t now find it so easy a matter to drown the magazine!—It’s most likely we shall have to get the powder up by hand, and heave it overboard.”

“Overboard!” interrupted Staunch; “suppose her foremast falls, and we get the fire under, we shall be more defenceless than a collier. No, no! we’ll still preserve our powder.”

“Impossible, Sir—how are we to do it?”

“Drop the mainsail—haul both sheets aft—’twill serve as a fire-screen; whip the powder up, and lower it over the taffel into the boats astern.”

“Egad, you’ll make every boat a regular built catamaran to blow ourselves up.”

“Well, never mind!—up with it for all that,” said Staunch.

“Overhaul the gear on the main yard—man the main sheets,” cried Hasty, whose tone betrayed that he thought if the duty were to be done, ‘twere well ‘twere done quickly;’ however disappointed that his own suggestion had not been adopted.

The preparations being completed, almost as rapidly as related, the gunner, with a careful party, soon relieved them from a fear, which momentarily grew more pressing; by depositing one half of the powder in the boats astern, and drowning the other by hand.

The flames now ascended so fast, that the topmen aloft were compelled to retreat from the foremast, and slide down by the topmast stays, to a far from enviable position on the bowsprit:—the communication with the ship being now cut off, by the raging of the flames on the forecastle. The fate of these brave fellows would have been inevitable, had not the last, prior to attempting his descent, with a presence of mind worthy of a more fortunate result for

himself, cut away both top-gallant bow-lines from their insertion into the leach of the sails as he stood at the top-mast head. These lines, from their great length, when made fast on the bowsprit, enabled the men to lower themselves into the sea, and escape to the boats now towing astern. Unhappily for the inventor of this singular fire-escape, the rope was by this time stranded, and snapped as he plunged into the water ; leaving him to buffet vainly the huge billows through which the ship maintained her wild career.

How gladly would he have exchanged his prospect of lonely suffering and death, for that of companionship in misery on board that bark, which, he foreboded, must prove the grave of many a messmate. The prayer was hardly conceived ere he was taken into the jolly-boat by the only seaman on board her, who, on witnessing this poor fellow's gallant conduct aloft, and subsequent accident, had, in a moment of excitement, cut the boat adrift, and resolved to share his peril. All this was the work of a few moments ; and now, for the first time, the boat was discovered by the ship's company to have parted. The poor fellows on board her were seen, as they surmounted the heavy deep swells, stepping the masts, hoisting the sail, and endeavouring to keep the ship's track, though at an alarmingly fast increasing distance.

Preceding the brig, and far to leeward, like an *avant courier* of her fate, or harbinger of wo, a dark mass of dense smoke, fitfully illumined by flakes of fire, or bursts of burning embers obscured that part of the atmosphere, whither the forlorn bark seemed recklessly to urge her desperate way.

The day was fast drawing to its dreaded close ; and no prospect of relief could be discovered throughout the wide horizon of waters, by young eyes straining themselves from their sockets, in bewildered anxiety, as these little centinels of the ship's safety sat perched in the giddy eyrie of the main-topmast-head. Many were the painful anticipations of these young adventurers, as they alternately glanced from the fire, now fast mounting aloft, to the hopeless prospect around. Nor will it be thought unworthy of the hardy profession which they had embraced, that the tear

glistened in those eyes, or traced those downy cheeks, as they thought with many a mournful presage, on their far distant home, and the unambitious happy companions of their childhood.

The explosion of a gun forward, in consequence of the fire now reaching it, was quickly followed by another, and suggested to the captain the propriety of discharging the remainder to prevent any accident occurring, should they be compelled to have recourse to the boats.

Such was the general state of anxiety on board, that the sun's approaching descent in the horizon had been, until now, unnoticed. By some perversity the quarter-master was destined, as in the case of the breaking out of the fire, to be again the holder of bad tidings. His lameness prevented him being otherwise serviceable than in watching the boats astern; and now, as he looked from the poop, his ominous voice was heard remarking, that they could not expect above an hour and a half's longer light. Pointing to the sun, as he addressed the captain, he exclaimed, "*She 'U dip, you see, Sir, in less than three quarters of an hour. She looks very watery too.*"

This observation roused the ever vigilant spirit of poor Burton, who, it may be conjectured, bore his fair proportion of the toils and anxiety of this dismal day. Fatigued as he was, he seized a glass from the capstan head, and flew aloft, determined to avail himself of the short period of day-light, that yet remained, to sweep with his eye the wide-spread prospect, in the hope of discovering approaching relief.

Three hours and a half had nearly elapsed since the fire was first discovered. Though sometimes partially checked by the ceaseless exertions of the crew, it as often appeared to be renewed with overwhelming violence; despite of the prudent precautions of Staunch, and the daring endeavours of his intrepid tars. He, until now, had been buoyed up with the flattering hope of saving, perhaps, the ship herself; but certainly with a fair expectation of falling in with timely succour, so as to preserve the lives of his crew in this distressing emergency. Independently of the threatening indications of the sky, and peculiarly marked manner of the quarter-master, in thus

directing his attention to the gloomy prospect of the setting sun ; there was something so dreadfully appalling in the idea of struggling with the raging element in the dark, or being indebted for light to the all-consuming flame, which must, ere to-morrow's sun, burn their bark to the water's edge ; that it required no ordinary command of countenance to conceal from his crew all the distraction which inwardly preyed upon his mind. Neither was his anxiety likely to be allayed by perceiving the boatswain relax in that boisterous loquacity, which had so long cheered them during their severe labour ; or by over-hearing the few remarks, which escaped from the seamen, while ominously hinting at the causes of their unfortunate fate. " Ah, Jack," said the captain of the forecastle, addressing the boatswain's-mate, who had again taken a spell in directing the pipe of the engine—" *one* pipe's as good as the *other* now—the game's all up, I fear. I thought no good 'ou'd come o' sailing of a Friday."

" I knew," said one of the fore-topmen, " them there pauposes warn't tumbling about the bows for nothing."

" Never mind that, ho," cried Cheerly, the captain's coxswain, " it can't be so bad with us either ; for you see the skipper still looks up nor-west-and-by-well."

These observations, uttered in an under tone, added to the increasing perplexities of this painfully responsible situation ; nor could even the compliment conveyed by the last speaker, who so generously borrowed confidence from the gesture of his commander, console him for the disposition now betrayed by these desponding spirits, to relax in their exertions.

He had been turning in his mind the best mode to save the lives of as many as possible of the crew, if forced by the fire to desert the ship. He knew that all her boats, so far from being able to contain the entire ship's company, could not accommodate even half the crew, in the event of bad weather. The danger could no longer be disguised. The carpenter was soon summoned, and received a prompt order to commence at once, with his crew, to saw off, and detach the poop-deck from the bulwarks abaft, in order to act as a raft, if required.

While thus engaged, the brig was overtaken by a squall

of wind, accompanied by a welcome torrent of rain. Although the violence of the wind, for a moment, fanned the flame, the influence of the rain tended materially to keep it under.

Burton had been nearly half an hour at the mast-head, sweeping, with searching eye, the whole extent of the horizon. It is in vain to attempt to convey in language the agitated forebodings, or agonizing recollections, which fain would have interrupted him in this anxious scrutiny. Severed, as he then was, though but for a short period, from the bustling throng on deck, busy memory availed itself of this temporary relaxation of mind, to suggest again and again, that, which had for weeks constituted his day dreams, and haunted his short slumbers by night. The flattering hopes with which he commenced this cruise, and its too probable termination, formed a contrast sufficiently striking. Until now, he had been altogether a creature of ambition; this feeling pervaded even the spirit of acquirement, and prompted every effort to distinguish himself. But, of late, all motive, whether of honourable emulation, personal distinction, or professional advancement, seemed to merge in one overwhelming solicitude. Even now, as he grasped the mast-head, to render firmer his giddy glass, and direct it with more certainty, in search of distant objects, on the utmost verge of vision, that loved object, whose ubiquity at all times, and at all places, he acknowledged with devout homage; flitted across his imagination, despite of the many subjects of fearful solicitude which surrounded him on all sides.

In this state of mind, it was not surprising that his attention should be arrested by the dubious form of a sail, which appeared for a moment astern, and coming down with the wind. That anxiety, which so naturally prompts us to be the first to communicate gratifying intelligence, had nearly impelled him to excite a lively, though, in fact, unfounded hope, among men disposed, like the forlorn crew of the *Spitfire*, to catch at any chance of escape. He had already drawn in his breath to enable him to give more effective utterance to the welcome words "A strange sail;" when the still imperfect syllables were checked by the startling recollection, that it could, from its size and

position, be only the unhappy boat they had been obliged to abandon reluctantly to its fate. However severely disappointed, he congratulated himself secretly, in having avoided any precipitate disclosure of his erroneous conjecture; and lost no time in apprizing the captain, that the jolly boat was still standing on in their wake.

"How far do you reckon we have dropped the poor fellows?" said Staunch, who adopted this tone; as if to divert, even for the passing minute, the attention of the sailors from contemplating their own disaster, to the more pitiable situation of their forsaken companions.

"About three or four miles, I should think, Sir."

"Scarcely so *far*, Mr. Burton," said Staunch, who was desirous not to extinguish the hopes of the crew, that the co-operation of this boat might be depended on, were they compelled finally to desert the brig.

"Certainly better than three," replied the lieutenant, who now perceived his drift.

"Well, even so—she 's sure to reach us, should the foremast go;" addressing this remark rather to the men near him, than to the lieutenant aloft: "and, if that don't occur, we can shorten sail, and pick her up."

This conversation had not been concluded above six or seven minutes, when Burton, his glass still to his eye, shouted in clear and exhilarating accents, kindly intended to reach every ear on deck—"A strange sail right astern!"

For a moment every operation on board was suspended, to listen, in breathless silence. The glad intelligence was again repeated from aloft—"A strange sail right astern!"

A loud shout of triumph burst from the crowded deck; once more that deafening cheer was heard; and again it swept, with the sough of the wind, across the wide waste of ocean.

"That's the boy!" cried the boatswain's-mate, who had as great a respect for the dreaded Sisters three; and was as rank a fatalist as most of his superstitious profession—"that's the boy, that always brings the luck. I never yet seed him go to the mast-head for nothing."

All on board resumed immediately their several em-

ployments, with an alacrity which seemed difficult to account for, at that very moment, when a new hope of succour had arisen, which was totally independent of their own exertions. Hasty exclaimed,—

“Better round to, Sir, and heave the main-taupsle to the mast.”

“Impossible! my good fellow.”

“But recollect, Sir! we’re running away from relief!”

“Better so than hurry on our destruction, before relief can possibly reach us. No, no; keep the wind on the quarter—clew up every stitch we can get at, and deaden her way with every species of stop-water.”

In some degree relieved from the onerous and agonizingly responsibility, which had weighed down his spirits, he turned from Hasty, and hailed the mast-head.

“Well, Burton,” said he, “what d’ye make of her?—standing this way, I hope?”

“She’s a large, square-rigged vessel, with studden sails low and aloft.”

“Aye, aye?”

“Steering the same way as ourselves!”

“One of our cruizers, perhaps?” said the captain.

“Can see half way down her taupsles.”

“Hurrah!” said the boatswain, “Poll’s got hold of the low-rope!”

“Half way down her tau’sles?” said Stowel—“then it ’ill take the standing part o’ the first watch to over——.”

“Hurrah! the engine my lads!” shouted Staunch aloud, anxious to drown the concluding part of this yet unfinished sentence. Then laying his hand on Stowel’s arm, he thus addressed him, in a gentle tone of reproof,—“Keep *that* at least to yourself—guard yourself, Sir—surely nothing can be more improper in any person, but more especially in an officer, than to suffer an expression to escape him, which may check the ardour of the crew, or repress their hopes.”

Nothing could be better calculated to set off, by contrast, the conduct of another officer on this occasion, than the incautious language of Stowel, who was one of those rough knots, as tars term them, or matter-of-

fact men, who unceremoniously uttered whatever he thought, however unseasonable the truth, or ticklish the inference drawn. Whatever might be the consequence of the practice, its principles could hardly be censured; since, in him, it was bottomed in plain dealing and downright honesty, which saw no reason to colour over truth. Burton was a bird of quite another feather. For he, participating in the anxiety of his commander, had represented the stranger as much nearer, than she really appeared to be from the mast-head. Indeed, when he asserted he could see her half way down her topsails, had he adhered strictly to truth, he must have confessed he saw little more than her top-gallant sails above the horizon.

The spirits of all on board were now as much elated, as a few minutes before they had been depressed. Although nearly worn out with fatigue, the substitution of other duties, besides those connected with subduing the flames, appeared to give the men a respite from sameness of labour and exertion. Sailors hate monotony—and Staunch had now an opportunity of relieving some from a duty of which they began to be weary, by changing their vocation. Those who had been drawing water, and working the pumps and engine, were now slinging shot-boxes, and towing them over different parts of the sides. The spare topsail yards in the chains, were lowered into the water, and the main-boom launched over the quarter, clear of the boats astern; all which produced a corresponding visible decrease in the rapidity of the ship, which might be said to hurry from friendly succour, and fly for its life. The sails had been all clewed up abaft, but the yards were still kept square; for though “bracing them by,” or pointing them to the wind, might have somewhat contributed to decrease the ship’s way through the water, still Staunch was apprehensive of so bracing them, lest the foremost extremities of the yards should come within the action of the fire.

By this time the foresail and foretop-sail were both literally burned to tinder, and their fiery fragments were whirled in eddies across the gathering gloom. The ponderous, and pitchy spars, on which the belying

canvass had been spread, were now heard crackling amid the rustling flames, fanned by the fickle element ; while the yard-arms, now deprived of their " lifts," and other supporting gear, by the destructive fire, were seen topping on-end, in a manner truly revolting to the feelings of poor Brace the boatswain.

" Aye, there she is—all in mourning* for her fate," cried Brace, evidently affected by the tottering condition of every thing aloft. Then resuming his loquacity, which, since Burton had descried the stranger, was observed to gain ground apace—" Hurrah !" said he, to those engaged in raising water—" Hurrah, boys ! drag and draw—she nears us fast—don't you smell 'em mixing the grog astarn ?"

From its greater thickness, and perpendicular position, the fire did not so soon penetrate the heart of the foremast, while the lighter spars were vividly burning throughout. The horizontal position, and greater breath of flat surface presented to the rising flames by the foretop, gave ample fuel for the conflagration.

The foretop-mast was now seen tottering in the cap. The head-braces, and every rope which led from the foremast aft, were all let go, and overhauled ; so as to facilitate the fall of this weighty spar clear of the ship.

" I say, Brace," cried the captain, conveying a mandate directly through the medium of an interrogatory—" I say,—can't we manage to cut away the laniards of the star-board quarter backstays ?"

" Eye, eye, Sir," said the boatswain, who piqued himself on anticipating, whenever he could, his captain's drift—" Hand us that there'axe—here goes,"—then flying into the thick of the fire, he hardly had time to make one ineffectual cut at the laniard, before the scorching blaze compelled him to retreat, without accomplishing his purpose. " Come—spell-oh !" cried he,—“ a fresh hand at the axe."

For want, however, of a rival of the true salamander breed, the challenge was not so freely accepted ; and the axe for some moments remained out of commission. This was not to be endured by Brace, who, after rolling and sousing himself well in the flooded scuppers, to soothe the

* When a ship, or square-rigged vessel appears in mourning, the yards on each mast are alternately topped on end.

anguish of his scorched skin, seized once more the axe, and casting a contemptuous look at the topmen around him, he bellowed aloud—"What! d'ye think then you're *all* for *Fidler's Green*?—When you come to unreeve your life-lines, you lubbers, some on you 'll find a hotter birth than this."

Then making a desperate rush on to the blazing bulwark, he succeeded, his back turned to the flames, in severing the triple turns of the laniards, which bound the backstays to the channels. The backstays now disengaged from their fastenings, Staunch directed the master to watch a favourable opportunity for "heaving the brig up in the wind;" with the hope, that the lurch to leeward, which would naturally accompany the sudden alteration in her course, would pitch the topmast, already wounded by the fire, over the side.

"It can't be doon, Sir," said Stowel, in a sullen tone, who had not as yet recovered from the effects of his captain's rebuke; "unless ye sheet-home the main-tau'sle, and haul your stop-waters up."

"That's soon done," cried Staunch, with an atoning air of ready acquiescence, strongly contrasted with that of the blunt north-countryman. "Hasty, sheet-home the main-taupsle—Burton, rowse the shot-boxes out o' the water, and—a—"

"Better first, Sir," said Burton, "apprise the boat-keepers astern of our intention."

"True, we must mind the powder."

"Aye, and mind, too, and not swamp the boats in the bargain," again growled the master.

"We can veer 'em further astern," cried the first lieutenant.

"Only for the fire flakes, I'd rather tow them at a shorter scope," said Staunch.

"Why not heave the powder out of the cutter at once?" said Burton; "there can be little doubt the ship in pursuit of us is a *friend*."

"True," said Staunch, "and if she were a foe, the powder would now little avail us."

"Besides," said Stowel, "you'll have to lighten her at last; for the boats are shipping green seas every minute."

Hasty, jumping aft on the poop, shouted to the boat-
pers—"Heave over the powder—bear ahand—we're
ing to bring the brig to the wind!"

This order was gladly complied with, almost as soon as
ued. Conformably with another order, the boats were
red further astern: and all was now announced in
adiness to attempt this nice manœuvre.

At this period, the ship must have presented, even to
a far distant spectator, a most awful and imposing
spectacle. The fire had got total possession of her for-
ard; and rose like a bright pyre against the lowering sky,
mounting in vivid bursts the very top-gallant truck:
while hurrying along each slender spar, or searching the
volutions of each pitchy rope, the subtle flame was seen
sliding and winding its way through the rigging like a snake
living fire.

Mounted on one of the after carronades, the master was
reserved, for a few moments, watching the rolling waves
in the quarter: then selecting the heaviest of the fast suc-
ceding seas, he quickly exclaimed to the all-anxious
crewman—

"Now stand by!—*hard* a port!"

Obedient to her helm the fiery fabric broached instantly
; throwing up her blazing bow to the wind; then rising
for a moment on the summit of a topping wave she fell over-
board down the steep descent,—gave a heavy lurch,
the effects of which were heard through all her groaning
timbers. The shock thus given to the lofty mast, now be-
st of all support, combined with its ponderous weight,
snapped it short above the cap, and pitched it, all flaming,
amid the hissing foam of the sea.

Rapid as was this evolution, it was full fraught with
danger. In the faces of all, alarm—in some, horror, was
strongly depicted; when as she luffed to the wind, they
beheld the whole volume of lambent flame flying aft, and
licking, with forked tongue, the shivering topsail; or
sweeping with sportive and fearful familiarity through her
mast, spars, and rigging.

"Right the helm!" said Stowel, as the mast went over
the side.

"Hard a-weather!" cried Staunch.

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"Clew up now—clew up, boys!" said Hasty, who had already ordered hands to the topsail clew-lines. "Clew up, and dont let the flames catch the foot of the sail."

A stunning cheer succeeded, as the crew perceived the wreck of the mast drifting clear of the boat astern. Again, in quick obedience to her helm, the vessel's head receded from the wind; while the flames, which had been somewhat checked by the "shipping seas," continued their devastating course, concentrating now their fury within the fore part of the ship.

END OF VOLUME I.

SAILORS AND SAINTS;

OR,

MATRIMONIAL MANŒUVRES.

BY THE AUTHORS OF

THE "NAVAL SKETCH-BOOK."

There's life in't.

SHAKESPEARE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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SAILORS AND SAINTS.

CHAPTER I.

A FRIEND IN NEED.

But now there came a flash of hope once more.

BYRON.

GREAT as was the anxiety which prevailed on board for their own preservation, it is but candour to admit, it was scarcely less evinced on the deck of the gallant vessel, now crowding all sail to her relief.

Distance rendered the *Spitfire's* colours, now streaming down the wind, 'union inverted,' in token of distress. Altogether undistinguishable. But to the experienced eye of the frigate's commander, who had ascended to his own mast-head to take a more accurate personal observation, there was enough to raise a presumption in his mind that she must be one of our own cruizers in distress. This accounted for the press of sail, which Burton, previously to descending, described her to carry. and which enabled the frigate before dark to see the *Spitfire's* lower yards clearly from deck.

Had 'Steamers' been then in use, and the practice of performing voyages by fire and smoke 'obtained,' instead of by wind and water; the *Spitfire* might, while daylight lasted, have blazed away until she had burnt to the water's edge, without have excited either alarm or sympathy throughout her ill-omened flight across any of those seas now navigated by the magic craft of the mystic sons of Hydraulic science, whose proud defiance of the wind, and contempt of a 'head-sea,' make the fearful vision of the 'Flying Dutchman' no longer a fable; and strip *Jack's* dread phantom ship of all its terrors.

The evening was ushered in with all the usual cations of the approach of bad weather, and as day sunk upon the horizon, the sky to windward assumed a stormy aspect. The wind too, which, though fresh, had been comparatively moderate, now became gusty, and the long swells of Biscay, instead of rolling in unbroken masses, were surmounted by ominous 'horses-head' (sailors term them,) curling their agitated tops into feathery foam.

In such a state of things, it may be conjectured that the anxiety on board both vessels was proportionally increased, as the sun shrouded his last limb in the bosom of the darkening deep. On board the one, apprehension prevailed that the brig would blow up, before she could reach her; while the *Spitfire's* crew, aware that no such explosion could take place, from the precautions adopted, were only alarmed lest the vessel should be wholly enveloped in flame before the stranger joined company. Indeed, if any thing could possibly increase the concern and perplexity of the commander of the frigate, it arose from perceiving the fiery pile pursue her reckless course unaltered, and wantonly flying in the face of that succour he was so anxious to afford. He had viewed the fore-castle at least twenty times, in as many minutes, to make repeated inquiries of the various officers by this time had brought half-a-dozen night-glasses to bear upon the fearfully interesting object.

"It's impossible!" said he, pacing the deck with considerable excitement,— "impossible he could be seen us before dark! —or why continue his course?"

"Perhaps, Sir," said the master, who had just counted for the cause, — "perhaps the fire is for'ard, and he thinks it safest to keep the wind on the quarter."

"Perhaps, so,—however, if guns, blue lights, rockets can draw his attention, he shall have the plenty. Send for the gunner, and—a——"

"I beg your pardon, Sir," interrupted the man looking to the crowd of straining canvass overhead, a solicitude which showed he was nearly as anxious about the fate of their own spars, as his captain was about that of the flaming fugitive—"but don't you!"

we're pressing her a little too much ? The sticks, you see, Sir, are beginning to complain !"

"Complain !—Let them :—how can you *hint* at shortening sail, when such a heart-rending scene stares you in the face ? Hold on !—hold on, good sticks !" said the commander, apostrophizing his supple spars with a burst of feeling that did honour to his heart. "Hold on but another hour, and we may yet save the poor fellows from destruction !"

Though the master attributed this unmerited rebuke to the excitement of the moment, yet he could not refrain from muttering to himself, as he turned upon his heel—"Good sticks, indeed !—They must be d——d good, if they stand the next squall !"—a prediction which appeared likely to be fulfilled ; for the wind was freshening fast, and often fell upon the sails in heavy and sudden gusts.

But in this instance, the lively interest felt by his commander, induced him to forego that caution, which, doubtless, he would have displayed on a less pressing occasion.

There are cases, wherein the most prudent and justifiable precautions may not only be impugned by inferiors, but be subject to official censure from a superior. Thus, though a ship will often be found to sail as fast ; nay, sometimes faster, by being not overpressed with canvass : yet when employed in the pursuit of a foe, or in 'support of a friend,' adieu to the reputation of that commander, who on such an emergency, shows not an extraordinary spread of sail. Such, however, was not the feeling by which the captain of the *Flora* was actuated. His courage was unquestioned ; and the name of Sir Harry Driver was hallowed in the hearts of all his crew, as the true type of humanity. It was not wonderful, therefore, that his mind was entirely absorbed by, and all his efforts directed to, one sole object—the rescuing his fellow-creatures from that fate, which it was now plain, either element must soon—too soon,—accomplish.

While the brave ship was rapidly cleaving her way through the water, the boiling masses bursting in spark-

g foam beneath her bows, the spars aloft were heard creak, and complain in every direction, under the heavy pressure of the low and lofty canvass, which proudly towered on each mast like a pyramid, despite of the gathering gale. The studding sail booms were popping upwards, and threatening each minute, as they bent to the breeze, to snap short in their confining irons. By the additional weight of their outer wings, the top-sail yards thus extended, notwithstanding the support afforded by their tightened 'lifts,' and well-bowed burtons, were bowing in the slings, and drooping their extremities; while the towering topmast was observed, not without some ominous foreboding, yielding to the blast: or oscillating to and fro with the 'send of the ship;' like a supple ash tree on the mountain top, contending with the storm.

Meantime the frigate's ship's company were actively employed clearing the boats, and making preparations for hoisting them out. The fire-engine was placed in the barge, and a proportionate number of buckets in each of the cutters on the quarter. In the sanguine expectation of arriving in time to save, at least some of the valuable lives now in jeopardy, this kind-hearted and considerate officer had not only directed a spare sail to be spread under the half deck, as a temporary place of repose for the night; but ordered several bales of blankets and purser's clothing to be got up in readiness, to supply the wants of such as might have suffered from the effects of the fire. Nor did he even neglect to apprise the surgeon of the necessity for being prepared to administer prompt professional aid to such as might require his humane attentions.

Occupied in issuing orders of this nature, respecting the economy of the ship, and probable future emergencies, his attention was abstracted for some time from the stormy indications of the weather to windward; and now, as if to vindicate the character of the master as a man of intelligence, the coming squall overtook them in their course, and fulfilled his worst predictions. Its approach was too rapid to be anticipated by any orders first on them close astern; ruffling, and whitening

with the rapidity of lightning, the whole surface of the stricken and agitated sea ; curbing and even levelling, with the keenness of its fury, the swell of the rolling waves.

" Ah ! just as I said—here we have it, thick and dry ! " said the master, looking over the taffrail.

" Man the to'gallant clewlin's, and studden-sail down-hauls," vociferated the captain, through his trumpet, in accents indicating alarm ; though nearly lost in the deafening conflict of the elements.

" Mind what you 're about with the studden-sail-tacks," echoed the first lieutenant, throwing his night glass into one of the boats on the booms, and upsetting in his hurried flight along the gangway, an unfortunate midshipman into the waist.

" Clew-up—haul-down ! " cried the captain, with increased earnestness.

" Don't start the top-gallant sheets, till the yards are down on the cap," bawled the master.

" Ease away the lower-studden-sail haliards—clew down—clew down the fore-to'gallant-sail," cried the first lieutenant.

" Let go the short-sheet in the fore-top."

" Hold on—hold on the fore-topmast studden-tack," bel-
lowed the boatswain ;—" I 'm blowed but you 'll have the sail across the stay. There, some lubberly beggar has let go the lower-studden-sail-guy in the waist."

In this state of confusion, the seamen tumbling over each other, as they flew about the deck in the dark, to 'clew-up' and 'haul-down' the sails straining, and ready to burst from their bolt-ropes, the fore-topsail yard snapped sharp in the slings, and the fore-topmast studding-sail-boom broke short in its iron. Deprived of all solid support, by the fracture of their spars, the outer sails, till now proudly extended to the breeze, drooped their shattered wings, and bagged to leeward in the blast. The furious whipping of the wildly agitated sails, struggling, as if to disengage themselves from their confining gear ; now shook the frigate to her very centre, amid the thunder-like claps of the rebounding canvass, which drowned alike the word of command, and the shrill whistling of the gale through the cordage.

"We shall never save the sails," said the master, "unless we bring the wind on the other quarter."

"D——n the sails!—think of the poor souls!" said Sir Harry;—"Cut away their gear, and let them fly to the devil!"—

"With all my heart, Sir," muttered the master, "so they're properly expended in the log."*

These orders were quickly complied with by a few smart fellows, who were right glad to substitute the knife for the more laborious progress of hauling their arms off, in a vain endeavour to gather in the flapping canvass.

Previously to the sudden coming on of the squall, the forlorn condition of the two sailors, who had determined to share each other's fate in the jolly boat, was fast improving; and they themselves, though unable to keep pace with, much less gain on the brig, were encouraged to hope, from the moment they perceived a sail coming down with the wind, that she was directing her course, so as to assist the ship which had been compelled to leave them to an almost unavoidable death. If so, as long as they held their frail bark in the same track as the burning vessel, they were almost certain to be overtaken by the ship astern, and relieved from their perilous situation. One moment, all was reviving hope, the next, despair. The squall, which, catching first the frigate, seemed to hurry her faster to their assistance, bore on its wings, to these unhappy men, swift and sure destruction; and the same furious sweep of the gust, which carried away the frigate's topsail yard, and studding sail-booms, had no sooner overtaken the fra-

* *Expended*.—That is "accounted for" on the face of the log-book as no longer part of the ship's stores; somewhat in the same way as the Irish waister has attempted to satisfy his captain, respecting the kettle that was lost overboard.

Waister.—"Sure, Sir, you can't say a thing's lost if a body knows where it is."

Captain.—"Certainly not, my man."

Waister.—"It's myself that's glad to hear your honour say that same—because I've a notion now where it is—for it's only this moment the kettle slipped over the gun, and I'm sartin sure it's gone to the bottom."

Doubtless the sails reached the same destination; and by parallel logic, their expenditure could be almost as satisfactorily accounted for to the Commissioners of His Majesty's Navy.

boat in its devastating course, than she broached too, and was instantly engulfed in the giant eddies of the deep: closing for ever the gates of hope and of life, on these hapless, yet faithful companions.

Possibly their hard destiny will be the less regretted by some who allow their feelings to be enlaved by their political bias; when it is confessed that these poor fellows, thus united in rude friendship, and a ruder fate, were no other than the blunt tars, whose predilections for a sailor's life were so long proof against the wily appeal of the itinerant evangelist of discontent and economy, on the beach at Dartmouth.

Contrary to his expectations, it appeared to Sir Harry, as he looked over the side at the fast passing foam, that the ship was pursuing her course with unabated rapidity; notwithstanding that her canvass had already been reduced to main-topsail and foresail.

"Bless my soul!" he exclaimed with astonishment, "she appears to be flying thro' it as fast as before we shortened sail! Heave the log, and see what she's going."

"Aye, aye, Sir," answered the mate of the watch, throwing himself astride on the after part of the quarter-deck hammocks, which were still stowed in the nettings—"Hold the reel there—Quarter-master, get the short-glass."

The sand had no sooner run out the fourteen seconds, than the long graduated line, which had been flying-off the reel with the rapidity of lightning, suddenly stopped.

"Ten-and-a-half, Sir," exclaimed the midshipman, in a tone of exhilaration, natural enough at his years, when perhaps nothing is more gratifying than a consciousness of rapid motion—"Ten-and-a-half," he repeated, rubbing his hands with infinite delight.

Like another *Cassandra*, gratified by the fulfillment of his unheeded predictions, the master was heard, in a tone of triumph, to exclaim once more—"Didn't I tell you so—she wanted no pressing such a night as this—D—n it, she scuds along like a witch in a hurricane."

The deep shades of night now settled on the cheerless prospect, and darkness shrouded every object in the gloomy

horizon—changeable fortune still frowning on the wretched. The fickle moon, fair weather queen of night, withheld her light as if to damp their courage and increase their embarrassments. The sullen scene was, however, fearfully relieved at moments, by a signal gun, anon by the livid glare of blue-lights from the frigate; or the explosion of the rapid rocket, high in the gloomy vault of heaven. Under any other circumstances, a spectator might have imagined, from the frequency of these discharges from her deck, that the frigate herself was the ship in distress; but here the position of the peril was defined with fear-fraught accuracy, by the wild raging flames, and the gloomy illumination of red glaring haze, which hung awfully suspended immediately over the *Spitfire*, in a semicircle, assuming an indistinct globular form in the higher regions of the air, occasioned by the reflective power of the atmosphere.

For some time past the hull of the brig had been rising to their view; and they could see distinctly the part of the vessel possessed and fast wasting beneath the wild ravages of the all-devouring element. The crew had relaxed their endeavours to extinguish the fire, as well from being worn out by previous fatigue, as from the encouragement they now derived from the near approach of succour. For such was the luminous effect, produced by the enormous mass of towering flame athwart the deep, that the ship astern could be indistinctly seen, and to their great joy, was conjectured to be a frigate of the first class.

A striking contrast was observable on the decks of the two vessels: while every one on board the frigate eagerly crowded the fore-castle; the unhappy crew of the *Spitfire* were seen, despite of the discipline of a ship-of-war, mingled with the officers, pell-mell, and couped up promiscuously on the poop and quarter-deck. As the frigate neared the fugitive, the red reflection of the flames fell upon her sails and hull, involving the friendly bark in the livery of fear.

A short consultation took place between Sir Harry and his officers, as to the mode to be adopted in approaching the burning wreck. In his generous anxiety to close with the brig, the captain announced his intention to run past him, in order to facilitate his dropping his boats on board.

"You had better not run any such risk, Sir," interposed the first lieutenant, in a suitable tone of deference to his superior—"we shall have his embers flying on board us, and setting fire to our sails and rigging."

"Well, but damn it, you see he won't heave to; what's to be done!"

"Why, run in his wake, within a cable's length or so," said the master; "then round to, and you'll see how soon he'll follow your example."

"True," said the first lieutenant; "besides, he'll then lie under our lee, and the frigate will make a smooth for the boats."

"Very well," said Sir Harry; for the moment we round to, out barge, and lower the cutters from the quarters."

"Whatever is to be done, there's no time to be lost," said the second lieutenant, "for I see the fire has taken hold of her main-top."

A sound as of a distant echo, faintly wafted across the waters, was distinguished on board, despite of the violence of the wind.

"Hark! if that's not a cheer," cried the master, "there's no snakes in Virginia."

"That it is, I'll be sworn," said the captain, with evident delight. "Return it by all means, 't will keep up their spirits. Turn the hands up, cheer ship."

Rushing forward, the whole ship's company were instantly crowded on the fore-castle, or seen jumping up in the fore-shrouds 'manning the rigging.' This mode of marshalling the men, and preparing to execute the order in form, was here adopted with the intention of rendering the effect of their aggregate voice more loud and distinct as it was borne down with the wind in a concentrated volume. That such a signal of their anxiety might excite corresponding encouragement in those whose lives were in imminent peril, the commander resolved to give it the fullest possible effect, and ordered the boatswain to 'stand by' and give the time according to the immemorial usage of the service in similar cases. Impressed with the importance of the office imposed on him, the boatswain now gave the preparatory flourish with his pipe, and a shout

rent the blast, which might have startled the monster in the deep, but that naturalists inform us (contrary to the profound opinion of that sage angler, Cotton, whose authority on piscatory philosophy is of some weight) that all the finny tribe are deaf. A second flourish of the gun succeeded, and a second shout louder than the first. Again, and for the last time, the stormy welkin rung with an exhilarating cheer, like the discharge of artillery, swelled by the loud, lengthened tones of all the frigate's men and officers. After a few seconds, the same faint echo, heard before, was again borne along the water, and as it died on the eager ears of the frigate's crew, convinced them that their heartfelt huzzas had already produced the best effect on those they were intended to encourage; and that the cheer was heard and returned.

Amid the anxiety of the captain to afford the most prompt assistance to the ship in distress, it did not escape him, that in consequence of the rolling of the vessel, and her labouring motion in the heavy sea, which was fast getting up, the operation of hoisting out the barge was likely to be one of considerable risk. The first lieutenant, whose character was caution to a proverb, perceiving the ship lurching heavily to leeward, suggested to his captain the propriety of previously running in the lee main-deck guns, lest in dipping their long muzzles, protruding over the ship's side, they should come in collision with the gunwale of the boat, and possibly stave her to pieces before she could be completely extricated from the stay and yard-tack falls, which were to lower her into the sea. In this suggestion the captain immediately acquiesced, exclaiming—"Right, right, run 'em in at once." Then addressing the master with earnest emphasis, he observed—"Remember the sheet anchor-stock over the side; and mind, when we're hoisting out the boat, you rather let her *fore-reach* than gather stern-way."

"Aye, aye, Sir! we 'll take care that pile-driver don't send any of our boats to the bottom. Quarter-master," added the master, now sensible of the importance of the suggestion, "mind after we round to, that you keep the helm no more than a couple of spokes a-lee."

The whole of the larboard battery of guns, from the sheet-anchor stock forward to the captain's bulkhead, were, to the language of the lieutenant who issued the order, run-in, in no time."

Every thing being complied with which prudence could dictate, the frigate, when within the prescribed distance of the *Spitfire*, which she was fast nearing in her wake, put her helm a-lee, and rounded to the wind on the star-board tack; laying her main-topsail to the mast, and assuming a stationary position under her two after try-sails, and fore, and fore-topmast staysails. To this alteration from her previous course, she drew the attention of the brig's people by burning a blue light on the fore-castle. This new position, and the signal which accompanied it, were no sooner observed by the brig, than she was seen following the same movement, and coming to the wind in a parallel direction.

"There she rounds to," said Sir Harry, "bear a hand—quick, quick—out boats."

"I knew it," said the master,—"took the hint—never was out in my reckoning yet."

Ere the boatswain had ceased vociferating "Hands out boats," the yards and stay-tackle falls were all manned by the crew: who had coolly anticipated the order.

"Away with the stays," cried the boatswain. "High enough—there you are—haul away the yards—D—my wig, mind what you're about with the fore-and-aft guy." And then anxious for the safety of the heavy barge, which continued high in air to oscillate from and to the frigate's side, with the roll of the vessel; endangering her being smashed in pieces whenever the weather-lurch flung her ponderous weight against the ship's bends, he shouted to the hands in the boat—"Out stretchers, boys, and bear off—Let go the stays—Lower of all—lower roundly—let go—o—o."

At the latter mandate, all hands loosened their hold of the various purchases, and the barge coming down by 'the run,' suddenly fell into the agitated sea. Taking advantage of a 'smooth,' both cutters were cautiously lowered from the quarters, and their crews, with some diffi-

culty, embarked, by descending, or sliding down the boat tackle-falls.

The two junior lieutenants appointed to superintend this arduous duty, repaired to the quarter deck, by the captain's order, and received a caution to beware of taking too many into the boats. "Remember," said Sir Harry, "that in a service of this nature, there is a still greater necessity for coolness, than even intrepidity; nor is it at all unlikely, that their discipline may yield to the dread of the danger, and occasion the capsizing of the boats, should they jump aboard of you in numbers.—Therefore be cautious how you run upon her quarter."

"Cautious!" muttered the master, "it seems an easier matter to pay-out advice, than coil it in. Had he minded mine, we should have saved both sails and sticks—But never mind—like the king, he can do no wrong."

As this was said out of ear-shot of the captain, it met not from him that rebuke, which otherwise it would, no doubt, have received.

"Be cool," continued Sir Harry, "be steady,—for remember coolness here is true humanity."

"Of the truth of that remark I am well aware," said the elder lieutenant.

"Never fear, Sir, I'll do all that man can," rather impatiently exclaimed a beardless Hotspur, who had but "shipped" an enviable epaulette, in consequence of recent exemplary conduct.

Whilst these arrangements were making, the *Spitfire's* people were occupied in cutting away, as far as the fire would permit them, the shot-boxes and spars towing overboard, lest they might stave the friendly boats coming to their assistance. Staunch now addressed the seamen and marines who surrounded him on the poop, driven all in a dense mass by the rapid encroachment of the fire.

"Let me warn you again, lads, not to attempt jumping into the boats—Attend to me, I'll be answerable for the lives of all, and shall be the last man to quit the ship!"

This assurance produced a short lively huzza, and was the first intimation the *Flora's* people received, that matters were going on as they could wish.

"Let me entreat you," he continued, "to take your

I wait till your names are called over as you stand
books—Two trips are certain to carry us all on
out if you attempt to crowd the boats, it's all over
!"

Do you hear that, boys?" said Brace, mustering up all
the energy left him from excessive fatigue, and the
sustained by the fire.—"Now mind, no scram-
-ble you know; fair play's a jewel—none o' you, I
will lose your call;" and then, turning to Burton,
his great favourite, he added, in an under tone—

"Mister Burton, as you know, I stand out o' hail
'you on the books, if you've any fancy for my
share as welcome as the morning sun."

"Well, the boats are off," cried Staunch—"haul up
your quick—let us despatch her first."

"Aye, Sir, right," replied Hasty—"she'll be out of
of the others, and prevent accidents;" then ad-
dressed the captain's clerk—"Muster the first twelve on
deck."

A party, consisting of the gunner, boatswain, carpenter,
and eight others, descended the vessel, not without
and solicitation on the part of Brace to Burton, to
assist himself of his turn.

"Come, come, Brace," said the captain, you've done
like a man, and no one on board requires rest,
except the surgeon's help, so much as yourself."

"Well, Sir, if you say so, I suppose I must bundle in,
as it's not so easy a matter to find a footing in a
cutter, with a fried pair of flippers."

"We'll lower you down by hand," said Burton.

"Thank you all the same, Sir; never mind—it's
the first time Bob Brace has held on by his head.
Well," ejaculated the crippled boatswain, turn-
ing to take his last leave of the now deplorable bark
"I bless you, old lass!—though many's the soaking
given me for'ard, and you now turn me adrift with
your head hide. I'm not the fellow as can forget you were
craft I wet my warrant in."—Then taking advan-
ce, lifting sea, and accompanying the action by a

cry of "stand *right* under," he, with reckless intrepidity, flung himself into the cutter under the counter, fracturing his arm in the fall.

As the boats passed under the stern of the brig, they were perceived by the first lieutenant to be no longer within the shelter afforded by the frigate's hull from the violence of the sea: He exclaimed to Sir Harry—"We must fill the main-topsail, and shoot her further ahead to shelter our boats, or they'll swamp in returning."

"Brace up—brace up," returned the captain—"back, and fill as much as you like, but keep the brig on the lee-beam; ease your helm, up, master—you needn't be afraid of the flames—besides, she's drifting to leeward two feet for our one."

The boats being now out of view, their anxiety was only, perhaps, increased from the circumstance of their being left to conjecture as to the success or failure of their hazardous enterprise.

From the superior elevation, however, of the frigate's deck over that of the lesser vessel, and the bright light of the flames, now involving her entire hull, and frightfully waving above the very heads of the people, Sir Harry was enabled to see partially what was done on the latter's deck. Crowded as that part of it appeared, which alone was tenable by the crew, it gave him a degree of consolation to perceive that there was no tumultuous movement on deck.

Had not the most judicious precautions been taken by the young officers in the boats to prevent more than once at a time from approaching close under the *Spitfire's* quarter, to take in her people, several lives must have inevitably been sacrificed. For such was the heavy pitching and sending of the brig in the furious waves, which now ran mountains high; that, drifting in this hapless condition, a mere wreck on the water, with her helm lashed a lee, she would, doubtless, have stove the boats to pieces under her counter.

Never before, perhaps, was there witnessed such a decided triumph of discipline over the dread terrors, naturally awakened in the minds of all the actors, in such a

scene. All waited their turn, without expressing any unbecoming impatience, or repining.

Perceiving that the boat, now closing the frigate, was not one of his own, and that her fatigued crew could with difficulty keep her head to the sea, and avoid presenting her broadside to the curling summits of the watery ridges, which, breaking on her beam, would have certainly swamped her, Sir Harry edged away the ship, not only to shorten the 'pull' of the *Spitfire's* people, but to quiet his own suspense relative to the danger that might be apprehended from the powder's exploding on board the brig.

"Boat ahoye!" he cried, through his trumpet, in a loud voice, which, from being borne on the wind, was distinctly heard by the people in the *Spitfire's* cutter—"Is the magazine drowned?"

"No, Sir, no—the powder——;" from the respondent being to leeward, and, therefore, having to contend with the wind, the remaining part of the sentence was altogether lost.

"Bless my soul! how truly unfortunate," ejaculated Sir Harry, in a tone of dejection, too plainly indicating how suddenly the intimation, apparently conveyed by this imperfect sentence, depressed his hopes.

"Aye," said the master, "you'd better, Sir, luff again to the wind.—Take my advice Sir, run no nearer.—You may depend on't," continued he, with an earnestness of manner which clearly indicated a conviction on his mind, that he momentarily expected the dreadful and threaded event—"she'll be going off in a tangent, and doing us a mischief:—one should give as wide a birth to a burning ship, as you would to a sunken rock."

"Hark!" cried Sir Harry, heedless of the master's monition—"they're again hailing in the boat—silence in the waist—silence fore-and-aft!"

Again the voice in the boat was heard, articulating each syllable with that precision peculiar to seamen when hailing at a distance. "The powder—is—all—" and again a pause ensued, as if the speaker was watching for a lull.

With the same syllabic distinctness, Sir Harry repeat-

ed to himself—"The—pow—der—is all—that I distinctly heard."

"Thrown—o—ver—board," added the voice in the boat.

"Thrown overboard—thrown overboard," exclaimed the first lieutenant, ambitious to be the first to repeat the glad tidings.

"Thank God! thank God!" briefly ejaculated Sir Harry, whose reanimated hopes soon betrayed themselves in every feature of his countenance, now vividly illuminated by the awfully bright conflagration.

"Pipe the gigs away,*—and have them in readiness to relieve those poor worn-out fellows the moment the people are out of the boat."

"Of course you'll despatch her again, Sir?" asked the first lieutenant.

"Certainly, if not stove."

"We'll have to bail her out first."

"Well, recollect there's no time to be lost in a sea like this!"

"The gig's crew were already on the gangway to relieve the *Spitfire's* people, who, from excessive fatigue, could hardly lay in the oars as they now arrived alongside. To assist them in their ascent, man-ropes and lifelines were hung over the ship's side.

"Heave in the sternfast!"

"Keep from under the anchor-stock!"

"Bear off—bear off!"

"Jump up—jump up!"

As these short sentences were uttered by different voices both in the frigate and the boat, some were seen jumping through the ports; others, dipping in the water with the roll of the ship, were like half-drowned cats clinging to the chain-plates; whilst the more robust succeeded in hauling themselves hand-over-hand up the side.

"All out now, Sir, but the two boat-keepers and the boatswain," cried one of the former.

"What's the matter with the boatswain?" asked Sir Harry, leaning over the lee-gangway hammocks.

* Meaning the gig's crew

"He's lying on his beam ends, Sir, with a broken arm in the bottom of the boat."

"Aye, and you might a said, broiled alive like a mackerel in the bargain," muttered poor Brace.

"Overhaul the 'whip' down for him," cried the first lieutenant, who having anticipated accidents of this nature, had taken the precaution to have it in readiness on the yard. This mode of 'transporting' poor Brace was so truly repugnant to his feelings, that he could not refrain from growling aloud.

"What! Bob Brace brought to *this* at last—burn't out o' one craft, and whipped into another, for all the world like a bag o' greens, or a quarter o' beef!"

"Come, come," said Tompion, the gunner, who had already descended into the boat with a running bowline-knot at the end of the whip, determined not to trust to other hands the slinging of his crippled messmate, who, it will be recollected, had so gallantly saved his life at the risk of his own. "Come, Bob, it's *my* turn now—d'ye remember how you roused the old lady, stock-and-fluke, from under the bows at Dartmouth?"

"Aye, damn the place, we've never had luck since we left it."

The gunner was now in the act of lifting by the shoulder his suffering shipmate on the thwarts, preparatory to slinging, when a deep groan from poor Brace compelled him to relinquish his hold, and drop him again in the bottom of the boat.

"D—— my toplights, Tim! mind what you're at. Haul away on my lower limbs as long as you like, but handsomely, handsomely with my sprung spars aloft!"

"Well, come rouse a bit, old boy—break bulk, bear a fist, bear a fist, we'll have the boat swamping right under us afore we can clap you in the slings. Upon deck there!" hailed the gunner: "heave us down a fathom of frapping, or as much as 'ill make us a bit of a breast-rope for the boatswain."

The crippled tar was now, to use the gunner's phrase, 'slung like a lady,' and instantly transported to the quarter-deck of the frigate. Faint and breathless, he was borne to the surgeon in the cockpit in excruciating tor-

ture, though not without casting a lingering look at his fast consuming favourite.

Hardly three quarters of an hour had elapsed, before the boats had made two successful trips to the brig, and relieved above ninety of her people from their perilous situation. In performing this duty some accidents had occurred, almost inevitable under such circumstances. The unceasing alternation of the rising and falling of the boats, rendered it a matter of nice calculation, activity, and expertness, to embrace the fleeting opportunities afforded, only at moments, to the faltering foot of the person descending from the brig; for not unfrequently when he felt the boat's gunwale beneath his foot, the fall of the retreating wave which had raised, not only instantly removed it widely apart from the brig; but presented, instead of the cheering prospect of the boat, as a means of preservation ready to receive him, the appalling sight of an abyss of agitated waters yawning to engulf the adventurer: again the wave rose, but the boat having been swept away, he was compelled to hold on the rope, drenched by successive seas, ere he could make good his landing, or be hauled into the boat neck and heels. A little midshipman, who had vainly made repeated efforts to catch the only safe moment for making his descent, was at length caught by the ankle, the only part of him within reach of a powerful seaman's grasp, when the barge was whisked away by a receding sea, and the poor boy only preserved from having his brains dashed out, in the concussion of the boat against the brig's bows, by the same friendly hand keeping him bodily under water, until the next sea separated the boat sufficiently apart from the side to admit of the boy being dragged over the gunwale. Contusions, broken shins, and bruises were the lot of many, and scarcely any escaped immersion, or reiterated drenching, by the sea breaking furiously over them.

In the last trip, however, the *Spitfire's* cutter, in transporting the people, swamped alongside of the frigate, and soon went to the bottom. The other three boats had been so stove by repeated concussions against the ship, in taking in the fugitives, or putting them on board the *Flora*, it was impossible to keep them free, even by bailing out

the water in buckets. To attempt another trip with any chance of success, was, therefore, totally impossible, and the most lively alarm was now felt by all for the fate of those left behind. The flame had made a tremendous progress abaft, and swept the whole of the poop; compelling the poor sufferers to shelter themselves, by throwing their bodies flat on that part of the deck with their faces turned from the scorching element to preserve their eyes from its fury.

The weather-main-rigging had been already burnt through: and the main-mast, now perceived to be tottering, was momentarily expected to fall. It was perceived that whenever this occurred the mast would fall to leeward, and thereby prevent the boats closing with the vessel on fire, in her only approachable part.

The wretched group, whose fate now seemed fixed, consisted of Staunch, with his two lieutenants, the master, and Drill, the serjeant of marines: who, in a luckless hour, conceiving himself a commissioned officer, from having command of the 'party,' resolutely adhered to the determination of his superiors not to abandon the ship until the last.

A hurried consultation took place on the frigate's quarter-deck, as to the probability of affording them relief.

"We've not a boat that can now live," said the master, "unless we hoist out the heavy launch."

"For that we've not time now in a situation of such imminent peril," said Sir Harry. "What's to be done?—something must be attempted for the lives of those brave fellows!"

During this short dialogue, the eyes of all the crew seemed intently fixed on the little council at the capstan; while some of the petty officers and elder seamen were observed, despite of the sanctity of such secret committees, encroaching upon the hallowed confines of the quarter-deck, as if to catch the whispered accents of their superior.

"Give me the jolly-boat," exclaimed the first lieutenant aloud, obviously addressing some of the crew nearest him, "and I'll see what's to be done—you know, Sir, there's nothing like a *short* boat in a sea!"

This intimation was not lost upon those it was intended to reach.—Cheerfulness usurped the place of deep solicitude in the faces of half a dozen of the nearest topmen, and as many voices simultaneously exclaimed—“I’ll be one, Sir.”

“There, Sir,” said Haultaut, the first lieutenant, “I’ve a picked crew to my mind in a minute.”

“With all my heart,” said Sir Harry,—“away at once.”

A race took place in running aft, to see who would be first on the taffrail into the jolly-boat, as she hung suspended across the ship’s stern; and it is but justice to the zeal of those who arrived latest, to admit that they were foiled in their efforts only, by the superior agility of their competitors.

“Mind how you lower us,” said Haultaut, jumping into the boat,—“and be careful and let go the after fall first, so as to let the boat come quickly head to sea.”

The boatswain of the frigate, who superintended this service, watching for a lull, very opportunely, after the rolling past of a third sea, lowered her down, immediately disengaging her from the falls, cleared her from under the counter, and she was swept rapidly before the sea to leeward into the *Swift’s* wake.

“Give way, my boys,” cried the lieutenant, “and round her quarter.”

A shock of horror burst from the crowded deck of the *Flora*, as the brig’s mainmast was observed, with its ponderous yards and gear, all enveloped in flame, falling over the quarter, and precipitating itself into the surge.

“It’s all over with the jolly-boat,” exclaimed the master, “she’s crushed beneath the wreck as sure as a gun.”

“No, no, Mister Job—I saw her since.”

“So did I, Sir,” said the boatswain, “and there she is, all alive and kicking, to wind’ard of the wreck.”

All hope of accomplishing their humane object seemed, by this dreadful, but long-expected accident, to be extinguished in the breasts of those gallant volunteers. To approach the ship to leeward was impossible; as it turned out, the lee-after ‘swifter’ had unfortunately es-

caped the flames, and held the wreck to the hull, and such was the wild agitation of the heavy spars, heaving and sending in the raging sea, that had the sufferers lowered themselves down on them from the poop of the brig, no consideration could have induced Haultaut to risk the hazard of having his frail boat stove to pieces by coming in collision with the massive mast or spars. Nor were the brig's officers less sensible of the impotency of their humane efforts to relieve them. In such circumstances, desperation is often the mother of enterprize. Burton was observed to cast a wistful eye on the leadline, in momentary abstraction. Hasty, who was well aware of his ability in resources, and the benevolence of his disposition, immediately divined his intention and exclaimed—

“Are you inclined to risk the part of life-preserver :—it's not the *first* time you tried it with success—remember Portsmouth !”

That sound fell on his ear like a knell. A crowd of agonizing sensations rushed on his mind, and lent a reckless enthusiasm to his wavering resolve. As much of the line as necessary for his project was unwound off the reel, when hailing the people in the boat, so as to arrest their attention, he lowered himself over the stern, exclaiming—“I'll risk their preservation, or perish in the attempt !”

The next moment he was seen buffeting his way through the waves, and soon reached the boat ; ere he was taken aboard, Hasty had attached the other extremity of the line to the hawser, hanging over the taffrail, which Burton soon hauled into the boat, and made fast to the head-sheets.

“All fast in the boat—haul in—haul in, to as short a scope as you can,” said Haultaut.

Staunch, and his three companions, clapping on the hawser, the jolly-boat was brought as near to the brig's stern as was considered to be safe.

“Here's shew the way !” said Hasty, gliding down the hawser, until the rope sinking by his weight, plunged in the coming wave, through which he was compelled to perform a submarine passage to the boat's bow, where, almost suffocated, he was lifted into the boat.

Damped, in some degree, by the experience of the

first lieutenant, in his transit through the rude element, none of the remaining parties manifested that anxiety for precedence, which is so frequently discoverable at public assemblies. Staunch luckily had long since avowed his intention to be the last man. The amicable desire to yield the preference was, therefore, confined to Stowel, and the serjeant. The master had the advantage in years, and was sure to carry weight when it was a mere point of complaisance. Every thing conspired against poor Drill, and he commenced his descent in compliance with the fiat of his commander, and the will of fate; for he had not glided half way down the rope, ere a huge "russian billow," with its curling top, struck him with such violence on the head, that, bereft of all sense, he abandoned his grasp, and was only seen heels upwards for a moment on its surface, ere he sunk for ever.

"Poor Drill! poor Drill!" groaned Staunch.

"I thought as much," said the master, looking wistfully towards the spot, and measuring his words as though to give time for the fulfilment of his prediction. "I knew he was afraid. A sailor would have held on till—"

"Heaven defend you or me from such another sea!" said the captain, with emotion.

"Bear a hand—bear a hand! heave yourselves over," bellowed the Flora's lieutenant, "the wreck 'ill break adrift directly, and stave the boat to pieces."

"Come, Stowel," said Staunch, "you know my determination."

Of that determination the master was long aware, and therefore giving up the point, he flung himself on the rope, and with better fortune than his predecessor, arrived safe in the boat.

And now, having discharged the duties of humanity and his station—as a man and a hero—the commander of the brig stood alone, of all its gallant crew, on that poop of fire,—the scene to him always of endearment; and erst of triumph. Happily released from all responsibilities as to the safety of those committed to his charge, he was not appalled at feeling himself, of all his ship's company, singly—reserved from their immunity from danger; and still within the reach of awful fate. Rejoicing

that his companions had happily escaped a peril which appeared inevitable by all human effort, he, for the first time, sighed a secret prayer for his individual safety ; and committing his person to the waves, and his destiny to Providence, plunged in the deep, and was soon after rescued from the raging element by his faithful lieutenant. In consequence of his head coming violently in contact with the boat's fore-foot, he was taken in perfectly senseless ; and only awoke to consciousness some hours after, under the care of a surgeon in the cabin of the *Flora*.

CHAPTER II.

THE RETURN.

The approach of home
After long travelling by land or water,
Most naturally some small doubt inspires—
A female family's a serious matter.

BYRON.

IN consequence of the prevalence of a south-westerly wind, the *Flora*, which had so providentially, as related, *hove* in sight when herself returning from a cruise, soon reached Plymouth Sound, where she was immediately boarded by the "guard-boat." The intelligence conveyed by the latter on shore, that the frigate had on board the crew of one of his Majesty's ships, burnt at sea ; excited no ordinary interest on shore : and was immediately made the subject of a telegraphic communication. Before Sir Harry had landed to report his arrival at the admiral's office, which was precisely in forty-five minutes and a half from the time of the *Flora's* anchoring in the 'Sound,' however marvellous the assertion, the First Lord of the Admiralty, snugly seated by his sea-coal fire, at Whitehall, a distance of two hundred and nineteen miles off, was actually perusing the report of the nature and extent of the

brig's calamity, as characteristically couched in what is now denominated semaphoric * stenography.

“ *Spitfire burnt—Bay Biscay—*

“ *Crew saved—ex three—by Flora—*”

Nor let this celerity be imputed to that influence implied by the adage that ill news flies apace : for had the intelligence been *vice versa*, that the *Spitfire* had blown up a French three-decker under the batteries of Brest, it may be presumed the triumph would be conveyed with equal dispatch, and certainly as much alacrity.

Amid all the bustle on board, in consequence of their arrival in port, it was observed that one person was seized with an uneasy restlessness, in which the officers of the *Flora*, delighted to reach harbour after a long cruise, as well as the officers of the *Spitfire*, seemed by no means disposed to participate. It would be silly to affect to conceal the name of this malcontent from our fair friends, who have no doubt already recognized in him their old acquaintance Burton. Amongst other subjects of perplexity, he seemed to have fallen out with a round jacket and blue waistcoat : which, though they fitted, to use a lively figure, like a purser's shirt on a handspike, never before struck him as unsymmetrical or unsuited to his rank. The honest check, or the holland of dingy saffron dye, in consequence of repeated washings in pea-soup during a long cruise, appeared to his, now fastidious taste, quite unworthy to enwrap his person. A little skimming dish hat, too, had fallen into very undeserved contempt ; and he was observed bustling about the ship, endeavouring to effect an interchange with some of his friends for more suitable attire. This betrayal of unwonted vanity served to awaken suspicions that, thought a *tar* afloat, he was a fop ashore ; and until the matter was cleared up by his communicative shipmates as to the state of his feelings, which was also corroborated by his immediate application to Sir Harry for a short leave of absence ; stating, that

* We are aware of the anachronism here as to the mere *term*—neither the invention, nor the name were known at this period—such notification being made by telegraph.

however unusual the application under such circumstances, very urgent reasons conspired to render it necessary. That officer was somewhat surprised by the request; and in reply, reminded Burton of the necessity there was that all the officers of the *Spitfire* should hold themselves in readiness, as a court-martial was sure to be ordered relative to the loss of that ship: that order might possibly be telegraphed down, and he must therefore decline granting any leave, except for a few hours. Here was a disappointment with a vengeance. The first suggestion of the moment was one altogether unworthy of him, which was to incur the imputation of adopting Gallican habits, and taking, what is known by the term, "*French leave*."

Retiring from the captain's cabin, he paced up and down the half-deck with hurried, moody step.—With his arms crossed, and chin entrenched in the palm of his right hand, whose fingers frequently extricated themselves with difficulty from his firm-set teeth; he at intervals caught up snatches of a very favourite author with him, which his imagination parodized thus—

"Passion lures me on—true; but how if it cast me off by alluring me on?—What then?—Will it ensure my passion a return?—I fear not.—Will it propitiate her mother?—No.—Will it conquer the veteran's scruples?—No.—Passion cannot give me rank then?—No.—Or another epaulette?—No.—If I go without leave, can I hope to get a ship again?—No.—If I sacrifice through it my commission, can it restore me?—No.—What is this passion?—A word—a breath.—Who hath it?—alas, I alone!—Does she feel it?—No.—Then she's insensible?—Yes—as though I were dead.—But does she not wish me still among the living?—I don't know—Why—because her detracting mother won't suffer her—therefore I'll think of it no longer, or my commission will soon be a mere scutcheon, and so ends all my prospects."

In fact, if it had not been for Mister Burton's classical recollections, his commission at this moment would have been in very imminent danger: and he had to acknowledge himself, like many other well-informed young gentlemen, indebted to his literary acquirements for a prudence beyond his years. So our young friend, whilst he

postponed his departure for these powerful reasons, determined that no time should be lost in preparing for his pilgrimage to the shrine of his devotion the moment he should be released from duty.

Contrary to the custom of good Catholics in the olden times, when expeditions of this kind were made to Lough-Deargh, Canterbury, or the Holy Sepulchre, as penances for secret guilt or unatoned crime,—and the offender disguised himself in a dandy-grey-russet suit, with a suitably sober garniture of cockle-shells—taking especial care to accommodate the peas in his pumps with all possible room, so as to avoid the anguish of their coming in contact with the blistered sole of the foot; our pilgrim adopted an exactly opposite course.—The most fashionable tailor Plymouth-Dock afforded, was employed to equip him, with a plain suit, *nauticé*, shore-going clothes.—The Hoby of the port encased his well-proportioned limbs in the tightest Spanish leather, and a *chapelier* ‘from Bond-street, London,’ added all the nameless graces of the west end, to the hat, which completed his costume for a pilgrimage to his Lady of Loretto.

The prognostications of Sir Harry were soon fulfilled, by the receipt of orders from the Admiralty, for holding a court-martial on the captain, officers, and ship’s company, on the occasion of the loss of his majesty’s late sloop of war, *Spitfire*.—As all the necessary parties were in attendance, the business of investigation was quickly completed, and the explanation proved so very satisfactory to the court, that it not only acquitted them of all blame; but the president on returning the captain his sword, complimented him, in very flattering terms, upon his able conduct, and the high state of discipline displayed by his crew, under the trying circumstances attending the destruction of their vessel by fire.

The minutes of the court-martial being transmitted to the Admiralty, together with the sentence; enough was disclosed, on the face of the examination of witnesses annexed, to reveal to their lordships, independently of the laudable and novel precaution of a ‘Fire Bill,’ so suitable and desirable under all circumstances of this calamitous nature; abundant reason to justify the panegyric

pronounced on the conduct of the captain, his officers, and crew. The result of such testimonials was as favourable as could be expected ; and, in a few days after, Staunch had the satisfaction of receiving an appointment from the ' Board,' to a captured French man-of-war brig, just purchased into the service, which he was ordered ' to commission forthwith'—taking with him the officers and crew of the late *Spitfire*; whose name the newly purchased brig was also directed to bear.

Long ere the receipt of this agreeable intelligence, Burton had, with as much speed as a pair of post-horses could carry him, taken his flight across the country. And now left entirely to himself, his imagination was at perfect liberty to run its wildest career, and the quick succession of his inward thoughts might be said to equal the rapid transit of external objects. Yet such was the state of abstraction in which he sat in the chaise, that he was neither conscious of the perpetual and momentary change of objects presented to the eye ; or of the beauty of the prospects, both by sea and land, which are so frequent in this delightful drive across that part of the coast of Devonshire.—Wrapped up in his anticipations of ecstasy in meeting again with Emily, the post-boy seemed sluggish, and the horses slow, though they often went down hill at full gallop :—and the rattling of the carriage-wheels over the pavement of Modbury market-place, reminded him, for the first time, that he had accomplished a great part of his journey without ever taking into his consideration, a very important objection to the precipitate haste of his flight—an objection which his passion had hitherto induced him altogether to overlook.—A sort of argumentative soliloquy was the result, of which, considering that we had no opportunity of taking it down verbatim, the substance was nearly as follows :—

" Why all this speed ?" said he ; " may I not be in too great haste ? ought I not to have written to the old captain to acquaint him with the accident which brings me again into his neighbourhood, and afforded him an opportunity of giving me an invitation ? Besides, it was the more necessary, in consequence of the abruptness of my departure, and the odd affair of the hat ; aye, but I set

all right by my letter to herself."—Had he known how that selfsame letter had set all *wrong*, by its falling into Mr. Crank's hands, it might have altered his impression as to his chance of being welcomed at the cottage; but of this he was ignorant, and, therefore, in the same strain, continued—

"How am I to account for my appearance here, whilst I neglect to visit my friends and family? But that's no person's business—I'm so far my own master. The old man, 'tis true, has given me *some* encouragement, but then—it was conditional. Instead of being better in circumstances, I am now worse—without even a ship—and burnt out. Her mother, too, will be more than hostile for this reason. What's to be done? Would to Heaven I could see her alone! That would be an opportunity worth a world! What an embarrassing rencontre will it prove, if that sanctified, selfish woman, is alone at the cottage, and treats my visit as a morning call, or refuses to let her daughter be seen. Perhaps, too—after posting all this way, they may be all from home."

Almost every one of these arguments were decidedly of a nature to dissuade him from pursuing his journey, and might have induced another man to turn his horses' heads in the direction of his native place; but Burton, strange to say, found in them a pretext for continuing his flight with unabated expedition.

But the best laid plans are often not half so felicitous in completing our wishes, as the unpremeditated result of chance; which, for ladies in love, and gentlemen in Burton's situation, so often works wonders. What the chance reserved for Burton to improve was, will be detailed with greater propriety in a subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER III.

PROS AND CONS.

The genius, and the mortal instruments,
Are then in council ; and the state of man,
Like to a little kingdom, suffers then
The nature of an insurrection.

SHAKSPEARE.

An apology is certainly due to the ladies, for the discourteous neglect with which we have treated that part of the fair sex, resident at Camperdown Cottage. But calamitous events, and accidents, have so thickened in the last hundred pages, that any details of the even tenor of their blameless lives, if intermingled, would have appeared quite out of place.

Nothing could certainly be more unsatisfactory to both Mrs. Crank and her daughter, than the manner of Burton's departure from the cottage. The causes of their dissatisfaction with his conduct were as different, as the motives and tempers of the parties concerned. The reasons for Mrs. Crank's displeasure have been already enumerated ; nor will those of the younger lady longer remain a secret, when it is known that, pursuant to her mother's original policy with respect to Burton's note to Emily, the latter never was aware of its receipt ; or even of its existence. Of the disingenuousness of such a practice ; of its apparent treachery to a young and artless mind ; or its tendency to weaken the respect due to a parent, or alienate the affections of a child, whose feelings are thus outraged by a breach of confidence, which would never be tolerated between total strangers ; it will become these unpretending pages, which, unlike the effusions of our female literary contemporaries, affects not the didactic style, to be altogether silent.

Not content with this breach of confidence and insincerity, she, in a similar way, obtained the letter written to her daughter, by the lieutenant, when cruising off Scilly,

previously to the burning of the brig. To this act she was impelled, by the same motives which governed her conduct on a former occasion; calculating that the best mode to prevent a smouldering fire from bursting into a flame, was not to stir the embers; and that nothing was more likely to break off a very improper and impolitic attachment, as she pronounced this to be, than to keep both parties, as much as possible, in ignorance, as to the nature of the sentiments they might reciprocally entertain for each other. In this treatment of her child, she was borne out by the conduct of other mothers of her acquaintance; who, in their alarm lest their daughters should cherish an attachment injurious to their interests, have imprudently forgotten, that the poison of passion is best neutralized by the assuasive antidote of cool, dispassionate reasoning; that to convince the mind, is safer than to control the will; and that ingenuous confidence, and affectionate remonstrance, whilst they soften the apparent rigour of authority, will often prove its most legitimate and powerful auxiliaries.

In one instance, at least, Mrs. Crank's prudence overshoot itself: for the singularity of Burton's disappearance, immediately after his being closeted with her uncle, especially when coupled with his ardent avowal but a few minutes before, seemed to warrant any other inference than that his silence could ever be attributed by Emily to his indifference. In coming to this conclusion she, at the same time, became equally convinced, that his conduct required that explanation which she was surprized it had not received. That the *tête-à-tête* between the lieutenant and her uncle had, for some reason, been the cause of his abrupt disappearance, she had no doubt: what that reason was she could not even conjecture, for she had good grounds to believe he possessed a share of her uncle's esteem and regard. That the invitation of the old gentleman to a private conference had some reference to her; and most probably to the posture in which Tiller had discovered Burton when ardently avowing his attachment, she strongly suspected: as well as that, under circumstances of such excitement, Burton must have explained to her uncle the state of his feelings in justification of his

conduct. Every minute circumstance connected with that passionate avowal,—his retreat,—the forgotten hat,—the absence of all explanation proved incontestably that some violent emotion had suddenly subdued his energy of mind ; and deprived him even of his recollection. All this served to prove the intenseness of his feelings : nor could she longer hesitate to decide that some important disclosure had then taken place, of whose nature she was totally ignorant, with reference to her uncle's and mother's intentions towards herself ; or that he had been absolutely forbidden to see her again. Yet it was not probable such an interdiction would have originated with Crank himself ; and she saw no reason to suspect her mother could possibly be aware of Burton's avowal, as she had had no opportunity of being previously made acquainted with the only circumstance which could have excited any alarm. Nay, she recollected that her mother had even entered the room at the moment, and given Mr. Burton a more than ordinarily civil reception ; here then she was destined to be foiled in her attempt to unravel the mystery following this train of reasoning. And it was only in consequence of reiteratedly returning again and again to the subject, that she was at length compelled to take up another clue to assist her in explaining it. Nor will it be considered extraordinary, that this course should have been the latest pursued, when it is recollected how difficult it is to bring us, under any circumstances, to inculcate our own conduct.

And now she set herself, with infinite pains, to examine if ever she had, in the course of their acquaintance, betrayed any conduct, which might possibly bear an unfavourable explanation ; or set her before him in an unamiable light. She believed she had almost too markedly shewn a preference for his intelligent society ; and that she felt gratified by the attention paid her, and the information she reaped from his conversation. All this was certainly true : but she began to perceive that his assiduities had been so unremitting, his solicitude so undisguised, that he doubtless felt he had a right to expect their object should not be misunderstood. Here, therefore, she

imagined she might have been unjust, in neither treating him as an admitted lover; or discarding him as a suitor altogether. She recollected instances in which she feared she had repelled his attentions, where she now felt she might have abated something of her maidenly pride, without any impeachment of her motives:—more especially when she recollected the great debt of gratitude she owed him for his gallantry, and noble disregard of personal risk, in snatching her from inevitable death. All this, she perceived, required more than cold acknowledgment, and *formal avowal of esteem*. She might in this respect then have been to blame.—He must have been aware of the weight of obligation which he had imposed by this generous act; if his preceding attentions were altogether unworthy of exciting her serious regard—and she feared, she must have sunk proportionably in his esteem, as she appeared to be deficient in gratitude. She would fain have sheltered herself from this self-reproach, in assuming that she had not been hitherto called on to pursue a more candid course, by distinctly explaining her sentiments towards him. On mature reflection, she felt convinced that period which called on her imperatively to throw off her reserve, had certainly arrived, the moment he himself made that ardent profession of attachment, which had been so very unseasonably interrupted by the sudden irruption of old Tiller. It was in vain she sought to justify herself for thus having withheld her confidence, from one who had so unreservedly and generously committed himself, by the disclosure of his own feelings respecting her. The presence of the domestic, it was true, might absolve her from the necessity of then making any explicit avowal respecting his proposal, whether of acceptance or rejection; but a single look might have been sufficient for either purpose; whether to confirm, or repel his hopes: and that look she now felt was his due, in justice to his, and to her own feelings.

Such was the conclusion which our fair casuist formed; and who can more expertly handle a sophism than a female, as to her own conduct? But however accessible to reasoning, or candid in these omissions, she still felt confident she had nothing to upbraid herself with since his de-

parture ; whilst of his silence, she imagined she had just reason to complain. Ignorant as she was, of the real state of things, she could hardly fail to construe that silence into a proof of the wayward fickleness, which her mother had often assured her she would invariably find the attribute of his sex. Owing to the kind offices of her friend, Miss Wilson, and the corroborative evidence of certain gossips, who in every country place are found circulating, with so much zest, all the little tittle-tattle collected with maliciously industrious espionage, the attentions and frequent calls of the young officer were no secret amongst her acquaintance. These persons, with a license peculiar to meddling, inquisitive spirits, (always proportionably irksome as the social circle is circumscribed,) had rather unjustifiably pronounced Burton the acknowledged love of the old commodore's niece. As he possessed both an agreeable person, and superior accomplishments, her vanity was rather flattered by his preference : and the gallant exposure of his life for her deliverance, it may be presumed, had already kindled feelings of envy in the breasts of many of her fair friends, who felt zealous of her early distinction, and a preference so flattering. Here then, it must be admitted, she felt herself placed in a singular dilemma, from whence young ladies, much her senior, and of more matured experience, would have felt it difficult to extricate themselves. She was committed to a certain extent in public opinion. She had, and she had not a lover. 'Tis true he had avowed his attachment : she, however, had not accepted him in the character of a suitor. Hence she felt that she could not fairly, or with justice, charge him with neglect ; inasmuch as she had but permitted his communicating by letter ; and that permission had been couched in terms, too general and vague, for him to conceive himself even favoured by any distinct or unequivocal preference.

It is the habit very generally with women, after collocating the arguments on either side of a question, to determine that those which are most germain and consensaneous with their natural bent or disposition, preponderate. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that Emily, whose heart might be said to be disengaged, should be

induced to adopt the conclusion that she had rather disingenuously concealed her sentiments from a man, whose candour and sincerity entitled him to more explicitness on her part ; and that, '*under existing circumstances,*' his silence was not so much to blame.

CHAPTER IV.

CONCEITS OF SCIENCE.

This is the way physicians mend or end us,
Secundum artem.

BURTON.

IN the affairs of this world, there are certain adages which are thrust as earnestly down men's throats as we do coin of the realm into our pockets, without inquiring whether they are sterling, but accepting them merely on the credit of their exterior ; imagining, to keep up the simile, that the more their surfaces are smoothened by attrition, or by passing through a number of hands, they are proportionably likely to be genuine. Of this class is the very trite adage—"the more haste the less speed," the truth of which, on the present occasion, was ordained to be shaken by the experience of an individual, whom we left some dozen pages back, posting like lightning across the Devonshire hills, on the wings of enforced expedition.

Not that an ordinary observer, or a stickler for these truisms, would not contend, that the counsel contained in this maxim, received, in Burton's case, an additional confirmation by the result of all this haste—for although certain it is, he fell short of his destination, notwithstanding the speed with which he travelled, the interruption he experienced proved ultimately the means of gratifying the wish nearest his heart.

About three o'clock in the afternoon of this day, Tiller, who had been despatched by Mrs. Crank to the doctor's

for a fresh supply of digestive pills—or, as Tom termed them, “gum ticklers,” and “stomach stirrers,” perceived a dense crowd collected around Senna’s shop, the windows of which were in vain blockaded against the curious intrusion of the younger and more agile part of the rustic assemblage, who nimbly climbed on the shoulders of the elder to peep over the blinds—A confused buzzing murmur ran through the crowd, compounded of exclamations and interrogations which are usually uttered by persons congregated by the rumour of some ill-defined and unexpected catastrophe.

We are not misanthropical enough to agree with La Bruyere, notwithstanding the anxiety and overwhelming interest which is daily evinced by multitudes to witness the expiring struggle of a culprit at his execution, that this anxiety arises from a perverted taste, or cruel propensity in our nature;—but, certain it is, that that never-to-be-sated feeling of curiosity formed the far greater part of the excitement in this instance among the group now collected about the doctor’s door.

“Lard, how paile he looks!” exclaimed one of these mounted myrmidons of curiosity—who, like “Peeping Tom of Coventry,” in the case of the Lady *Godiva*, was enjoying a gratification interdicted to those less nimble than himself—“He looks as if he was going to vaint.”

“Why not give him a drop a drink?” vociferated a little bandy-legged mate of a merchant-man, who seemed, from the *rum* complexion of his nose, to have imbibed the idea that liquor was a sovereign remedy for the accidents, as well as the ills of life.

“My eyes—there they be zlitting the zleeve of his beautilvul coat!” said this elevated observer.

“Dang it, what zhame to zarve the poor zoul zo!” exclaimed a third.

“Tut, tut, you fool, how can they help it—if your arm was broke, you woudn’t like to have it hauled out of the sockket with the sleeve,” rejoined the mate.

Tiller, who felt himself a man of importance, and whose curiosity was somewhat excited by the reports of the “look-out men” aloft; rather roughly pushed aside those who were nearest him, exclaiming—

"Stand aside—make a lane there!—let's see what's amiss."

He now began knocking violently at the door, indignant that bolt or bar should be drawn against a person of his consequence.

"Come, bear a fist," said he. "I want a box o' your stomach-stirrers for my missess."

This well-known voice appeared to have the same influence as the charmed words "Open Sesame," of Ali-Baba; and the door, as if by enchantment, instantly flew open. What Tiller saw, appeared to produce a surprise, certainly of another kind, but nearly equal to that experienced by the Persian himself, upon the discovery of the fabled riches of the cavern. He certainly saw enough to make him, with all possible expedition, "*bout ship*," as he termed it, "and let fly his top gallant sheets," as a signal for an enemy in sight.

This manœuvre, for Tom delighted in his heart and soul to do every thing ship-shape; he accomplished by holding his handkerchief by the upper corners high above his head, leaving the lower loose, to fly and flap in the wind; he occasionally accompanied the signal with a 'phew,' 'phew,' or a shrill short whistle, as much as to say,—“here's a piece of business.”—In his hurry to reach his master he very nearly upset his wife in the kitchen, who rewarded his civility by a slap of a bunch of sausages on his blind eye.—Like Themistocles of old, he only thought of the public, and of the common enemy: and he rushed without the least ceremony into the parlour, where the old gentleman sat, spectacles on nose, conning his code of signals.

"I made the signal, Sir," said Tom, "but you didn't see it."

"What signal?"

"Why here's the devil to pay, and no pitch hot,—I never had such a job in my life to break the line."

"What line?" said Crank, who in more senses than one, found himself already *at sea*.

"Why, the crowd round the doctor's door.—Bless your heart, it's more like *Recall-day* at Portsmouth Dock-yard, nor any thing else.—'Where are you shoving to.'

says one—'Rig-in your studden-sail-booms,' says another—'What the devil do *you* do crushing a body?' cries a woman with a child in her arms, and big as a butt with another—'What do the likes of *you* do here with those babys?' thought I,—for you see, Sir, in a crowd o' that sort, a fellow mustn't give *too* much lip."

"I wish, for *my* sake, you always thought yourself in a crowd."

"'An't I going,' says I, 'for my misses,' " continued Tom,—"'Why, you old fool,' says a fellow—'your misses!—it's not *your* Misses.'—'Well, then,' says I, 'my missess' man.'—'Kase you know, Sir, I couldn't say *her* midwife, you know.—'Your Misses' man?—your *young* Misses' man,' said that saucy cod-catching chap, as I bundled out o' the door one night.—He, you know, Sir, as brought the letter, and wanted to see Miss Emily, the night afore the brig sailed."

"Well?" said Crank, betraying an impatient curiosity.

"Well, Sir, as soon as I forces my way into the shop—who should I see, spread-out like a corpse, on a grating—though I believe 'twas a shutter too, yes it was, for 'twas more like a hatch nor a grating."

"Well, go on, man!"

"Well, who should I see but that there young blade,——"

"What young blade?" interrupted Crank, with increased interest.

"Why, that there Mister—Mister—I can't mind his name at the moment—that there—that there lieutenant that jumped overboard after Miss Emily."

"Gracious God! Why surely you don't mean Mister Burton?"

"That's the man—the dientical man!"

"Impossible, Thomas—there's not a pennant in the port—no man-o'-war arrived."

"Oh! as for the matter o' that; Sir, the craft's capsized."

"Capsized!"

"Yes, Sir, the helmsman was groggy—and this here Mister Burton, you know, Sir, was hove clean out of the

quarter-gallery window, and found lying on his beam-ends in a ditch, with his shoulder slipt out o' the step."

"Found in a ditch?"

"Yes, Sir, the boy was cracking-on too much canvas, and over she goes."

"The boy!—The helmsman!—didn't you say the ship was capsized?—What the deuce should bring a man-o'-war in a ditch?"

"I doesn't know, Sir,—though I've seen, too, afore now, a man-o'-war swimming in a dyke—but, to be sure, 'twas in Holland——"

"D—— the dykes, and the Dutch—I wish you were drowned in Hollands."

"Well, Sir, a man might sink in worse swissel."

"Stand clear, you foggy-headed fool.—Give me my hat and stick," cried Crank, flinging the signal-book aside, and tugging, as usual when strongly excited, at the waistband of his small clothes—I'll soon come at the truth of it."

"You'll find it true enough.—Didn't I see with my own eyes Mister Senna rigging-out a parbuckle purchase over the back of a kitchen-chair to haul the heel o' the limb back in its place?"

"Well,—don't say a word to the women—Come along with me, and clear the coast."

Clapping on his hat in his hurry 'upon three hairs,' the warm-hearted old veteran was seen trudging down to the village, with an eagerness of manner, and length of stride that quite astonished the natives.—Yielding to the impetuosity of the old officer's charge pike in hand, the crowd was observed falling back on either side, so as to open a passage to the apothecary's door;—whilst the imps and urchins notified his approach to the inmates, by exclaiming—"Here's the admiral—here's the commodore!"

In the interval prior to Tiller's re-appearance, an unsuccessful effort had been made to reduce the dislocation by the pharmacopolist and his assistant,—an uncouth, square-built, red-headed rustic, who had been taken from his father's plough in consequence of an unexpected change of fortune, to wield a pestle, and obtain a summary qualification as a professional man, to maim and

mutilate his fellow-creatures by Act of Parliament, and according to law.

In a moment after the alarm had been given out of doors, the veteran appeared within.—A look sufficed him to recognize his young friend, however disguised in his present *déshabillé*.

"'Tis he! 'tis he, poor fellow," said Crank,—then carefully approaching the patient, whom he perceived, from the expression of his countenance, to be in too much pain to endure one of those violent demonstrations of cordiality not uncommon with the veteran, he rested both hands upon his cane, leaning forward, and looked for some time piteously in his face.

"I'm sorry, my dear boy,"—said he, "truly sorry to see you in this sad plight.—My Thomas gave me a terrible fright about you—but I could hardly understand him.—He told me the *craft* was capsized!"

"No, Sir,—bur—burnt," replied the lieutenant, who, from the effect of pain, was scarcely able to articulate.

"Burnt!—worse and worse!—Where?"

"In the Bay—down—down to—the—water's—edge," he would have said, but that Senna edged in an order to his servant for a glass of water, remarking, "that this *incoherence* of manner was a more dangerous symptom, than even the *thirst* he experienced."

"God bless me!" said Crank, "this blind old block-head came up with a cock-and-a-bull story, and told me he was found in a ditch."

"And so he *was*, Sir," said Tiller, warmly, nettled at the imputation cast on his veracity.—"But I suppose now," added Tom, in a half whisper—"he'll deny it in *course* if it suits him."

"Blown up then?" inquired Crank, inquisitively.

To this interrogatory, Burton gave a look of acquiescence, and feebly uttering—"Bay of Biscay," fell back in a swoon against Senna's assistant.

"Impossible!" exclaimed Crank.—"Another sky-rocket-Jack, by all that's brave.—What! blown up in the Bay of Biscay—and dropped in a ditch at Dartmouth!"

"Burton, Burton," cried the veteran, with great emotion, letting fall his stick, and endeavouring to raise the

lieutenant's drooping head.—“ Ah! the poor fellow's off, I b'lief.—Gad, I wonder he wasn't shattered to pieces.—Any body else saved?”

“ You'll excuse me,” formally interrupted our Hypocrites—“ this is no common case—we must not permit too many questions—for though the patient be in a *syncope* at present, the noise of speaking, and the sound, you must be aware, by its oral vibration externally, acting *internally* on the brain, disorganizes the a—medullary substance by nervous action, and occasions those a—febrile symptoms generally through the system, so very desirable, in cases of this sort, to repress.”

“ Where am I?” sighed Burton, who appeared slowly re-animating.

“ Here you are, my boy—near your friend—d—— it, it does my heart good to hear your voice again.”

“ I hope you'll break it by degrees,” said Burton, hesitatingly.

“ We shall *break* nothing—it's a simple operation in able hands.—Ah, now he's coming to himself we shall be able to proceed *secundum artem*.” Though no doubt a town practitioner would have preferred the moment of insensibility as most favourable for reducing the dislocation.—“ Perhaps,” continued Senna, “ you'll favour me by lifting your hand to the head.”

“ Lift!—I could as soon lift the Eddystone lighthouse.”

“ Ah!—it's exactly as I suspected—I'm seldom mistaken,” said Senna, repeating the painful treatment he had occasioned his patient to undergo, prior to Crank's arrival.—“ The case is clearly a displacing of the *humerus*.—It's our object to endeavour to reduce it.—The last case of luxation which I treated was, I confess, a troublesome one.”

✓ Burton, whose anticipations at this moment could not be very comfortable, from the history given of his case, could not suppress an exclamation of pain, in consequence of the rough manner in which this man of science suddenly attempted to raise his arm.

“ Surely I don't hurt you?” said Senna.

"Indeed, Sir, you do—that put me to very exquisite pain."

"Oh that's quite impossible!—Believe me, my good friend, it's mere apprehension of mind, which a—sympathizes with the a—general disorganization of the frame—you must permit me to be the best judge in these cases."

"That's d——d good!" exclaimed the angry veteran.

"It's not your arm that's unshipped.—But feeling, I've heard's no fellow."

The learned operator, unmindful of this interruption, continued oscillating the patient's arm up and down, remarking, with great self-complaisancy, that—"the advance of science had introduced very important improvement in the treatment of cases of this nature," whilst the subject of his experiment winced with acute and excruciating pain.

"Holloa, Senna! one would think you'd got hold of a pump-handle," said the captain.

"Pardon me, these muscular a—movements are merely experimental, to ascertain the extent of the injury inflicted—expert practitioners never stand upon trifles."

"Trifles d'ye call 'em!" cried Crank.

"Just so."

"Oh! for God's sake man, mind what you're about!" roared Burton.

"I perceive we must have recourse to the chair again—a simpler operation than the method of the *ambe*.—You've heard of the invention? Freke's."*

"No more of your *freaks* now," said the captain—"Come, bear-a-hand and ship the man's shoulder at once."

The ill success of a fresh attempt to accomplish the operation, occasioned another groan from Burton; and a remonstrance as to the pain to which he appeared to be unnecessarily put.

"I'm perfectly aware," said Senna, "some sympathetic uneasiness may possibly proceed from the a—swollen state of the a—adjacent muscles—but to pronounce it *pain*, is a positive *profanation* of the term."

* *Ambe*, an instrument for reducing a dislocated shoulder, improved on by Surgeon Freke, formerly of Bartholomew's Hospital.

After repeated efforts, in which it might be questioned whether the pertinacity of the operator, or the resignation of the patient, were most to be wondered at, the shoulder, more by main force than dexterity, was replaced in its proper situation :—though Senna failed not to enlarge on the success of the latter, to which he was solely disposed to attribute the favourable result.

The moment after its completion, the old man, with the most unaffected cordiality, congratulated the patient that things were no worse ; and whilst expressing great anxiety to be acquainted with the cause of his accident, prudently abstained from entering into details at present, as he said he was “anxious to get him into sick quarters.”

Here Burton hinted at taking up his quarters at the nearest inn—a proposition which seemed to excite both surprise and displeasure on the part of his friend.

“Tut, tut, man—I’ll hear of no such thing. We’ll sling you a cot at the cottage till you’re ready to report yourself out of the doctor’s list,”—then turning round to Tiller, he added—“Come, Thomas—let’s make for home and rig-out a room for him.”

Burton’s apologies for the trouble which this would occasion in the family, were overruled as soon as made by his arbitrary but kind friend ; who once more shook him by the hand, and left him in a stupor of astonishment at perceiving, that what he had considered as a most untoward accident, was likely to procure for him that which he had never ventured to anticipate ; namely, being received as an inmate and resident at Camperdown.

CHAPTER V.

TURN IN, OR TURN OUT.

The rich blockhead's store
 Oft opens the door,
 At which poverty's fate is 'turn out.'

KENNET.

"WHAT is all this noise about?" impatiently exclaimed Mrs. Crank, who, in consequence of a loud knocking against the wall of the adjoining chamber, had been rather unseasonably interrupted in devotional exercises; or, perhaps, the duties of the toilette, for which the former served daily as a pretext to retire, about this hour in the afternoon.

"It's the master, Ma'am," said Tiller, as he passed her door, who had already determined to avail himself of the first opportunity afforded him of throwing off from his own shoulders any participation in what he considered little less than surrendering a footing on their own deck to an enemy.—"It's the master, Ma'am: we're nailing up a clit for the head clew of the cot."

"What for?—who is to occupy that room?" inquired the matron.

"A disabled man," snappishly returned Crank, from within, in a voice which would have reached the further end of a longer corridor than Camperdown Cottage could boast.

"A man!—and so near my apartment—what man?" cried the lady, in an emulously elevated tone.

"A friend in distress!" promptly bellowed the old gentleman.—"You're always talking about charity and benevolence—we'll now see if you've got any."

This was an alarm to her pride; an insult to her professions—it was blowing the clarion of war. In she came—her eyes beaming indignation, her port betokening defiance, and armed in "all the panoply divine" of that female weapon, eloquence, she stood conscious of

her powers in the door-way, where Crank, and his factotum, were employed in their preparations; and thus repelled the insolent aggression.

"I know not who may be the object of your bounty in this instance; I can easily imagine your choice will be a proof of your prejudices, rather than your philanthropy—some sailor, or broken-down comrade, I suppose?—But I do think, brother, you might content yourself with giving away your property to persons of their loose habits, without bringing them into your house, and forcing their *odious* society upon me and my daughter."

"Hoity, toity!—here's a breeze! How did you know all this—who told you?" said Crank, imagining the secret of his solicitude had transpired.—"If the cloth don't assist one another, who will?—Look at the Articles of War—what do they say?—'Assist a known friend in view'—there's charity in earnest.—Suppose you had been blown up at sea, and dropped in a ditch, wouldn't you flock to your *meetingers*?—I'll warrant you would; but it all comes of your dislike to the man."

"Dislike?—Who can you mean?—I confess I can't conjecture."

"Why, Burton, to be sure."

"Burton!—*that* wretch!" said she.

"Aye—he's now down at Senna's; and devilish bad, too, I can tell you."

"Well, Sir, this may be your charity I call it insanity!—If he enters here, after what has passed, our remaining here is impossible!"

"Why, bless you," cried Crank, without suffering the dispute to make him relax in his preparations for the invalid's comfortable accommodation—"the man's half dead!"

"So much the worse; he is likely to remain the longer on our hands—but, after the lengths he has gone, it would be closing my eyes to my daughter's ruin to stay an hour after he became an inmate."

"Well, but softly, now—hearken to reason," said Crank, pulling her gently into the room, whilst he shut the door cautiously, Tiller continuing, all the while, to thump manfully with a hammer at a brass-headed book,

which was slowly progressing through the wall—"hearken to reason."

"*Mister Crank*," said she, laying a most unamiable emphasis on a title which she knew was peculiarly obnoxious to the feelings of the veteran—"Mister Crank, if you have any thing private to communicate, let that noise cease, and its author retire," and so saying, she brushed past him with the air of one determined to keep her word.

"Thomas—stand fast awhile—suppose you go and overhaul the cot, and see none of the clews are stranded—It wouldn't do, you know, in his present state, to let him come down by the lump."

Thomas, before the conclusion of this sentence, had already anticipated, and partly obeyed the unwilling intimation, and retired with a full intention of not appearing again until especially summoned; from which, we may safely infer, that faithful dependant was of opinion that the difference of his situation in life did not disqualify him to sit on a council of state in family matters; or from being admitted to the confidence of his superiors.

"And now," said the matron, with studied and ceremonious stateliness, "whilst you talk to me of hearkening to reason, what possible reason can you induce for bringing this young man into your family, after *all* that has occurred. What will our neighbours say of it?—What will the world think?"

"The world!—a wide word that—what cares the world for all Dartmouth, and all that's in it;—a drop o' water in the ocean. But as for the young man, he's as innocent as a child.—You were always alarmed; but I told you there was nothing in it; and if there was, too, you ought to know there's nothing more likely than opposition to bring them foul of one another."

"But what *I* want to know is, how the profligate can again shew his face *here*? Has he attempted to account for his former conduct?" said she, pacing the room in great agitation—"Has he attempted to explain the object of that odious letter? or the reason of his abrupt departure?"

"Egad, it's the way with him, I believe—for his *arri-*

val is still more abrupt—by all I can learn, he came here like a sky-rocket.”

“All which,” interposed the lady, “convinces me he is one of those singular characters, whose acquaintance can be no acquisition.”

“Now, as to that, we differ—but I have pledged my word he shall be welcome, and can’t go back; besides, he’s so ill—I couldn’t have the heart to drive a dog from my door in his shattered condition.”

“That,” said the female casuist, “would be an argument for admitting the *plague*.”

“What the devil do you know about the plague?—Are you fool enough to believe it’s contagious. I’ve been at Smyrna, and all over the Levant, and never was afraid of it; but, if that’s all, hoist the *yellow flag*, and put him in quarantine here. Let Tiller attend him until he’s clean bills of health.”

“It’s not his health, Sir, I allude to—’tis the moral taint of his society—the plague-spot of libertinism that I dread.”

“Now, there again, sister, you’re wrong.—Give him his run; he’s unable to do any harm if he wished; which I don’t think he does. But, mark me! Young people hardly ever fall in love unless you go between ’em, and put such stuff in their heads by trying to keep ’em asunder.”

“Your sentiments, brother, are singular;—they are your own:—but mine have a right to be respected. I see nothing but mischief likely to follow this step—and resolved I am that—”

This colloquy was interrupted by the blooming Emily herself, who came smiling into the room, and observing their attitudes, which indicated strong opposition of sentiment, appeared not more at a loss to conceive the cause of their present disagreement, than to account for the active preparations, made and making, for fitting up a room hitherto unoccupied.—

“What new inmate do you expect?” said she; “I should think it was no *lady*, by these singular preparations.”

"Not more singular than the occasion!" scornfully answered her mother.

"I'm sorry it is so singular, for the poor fellow's own sake," said Crank—"but it's all the fortune o' war—afloat to-day—aground to-morrow."

Emily, after looking alternately in their faces, observed—

"Well, when this mysterious personage appears, it is to be presumed the *incognito* will be at an end—at present you both seem determined to keep the secret."

"You shall know all, my dear, in good time; but at present I wish to be alone with your uncle."

"Oh, there's no occasion for her absence—we are only talking about Burton, who has met with a sad accident, and landed in our neighbourhood—he's coming here to take up his quarters—"

"He is *no* such thing!" exclaimed Mrs. Crank, with determination; whilst a deep hue of crimson suffused the fine features of Emily. The exclusive dominion of the rose was as quickly usurped by the lily; for a moment afterwards an ashy paleness overspread her countenance. This rapid transition of feeling escaped not the watchful and penetrating eye of her mother, who failed not to infer that her varied emotion indicated as much of indignation as of surprise.

"I tell you what it is, sister,—I'm always captain of my *own* ship. So the less there's said on that subject the better. The fellow now requires a friend—and *dam-me* if I'll desert him!"

A momentary hectic in Emily's complexion, seemed to indicate that she was suffering an internal struggle; whilst her mother refrained for making any reply, lest, in the course of their contention, Emily should be put in possession of that explanation, which it had been all along her mother's policy to prevent. Her malignant star, however, prevailed.—Crank's eagerness to defend his friend triumphed over the resolution the reader will recollect he once had jocularly formed, to keep them both in ignorance as to the real state of Burton's sentiments; and he burst forth with an interrogatory, which terrified one, and surprised the other.

"Hasn't the young fellow been always honourable, and above-board?—That *letter* to the child, too, which you made such a fuss about, was natural enough—if you knew all I said to him on the subject."

"What letter, uncle?" exclaimed Emily, thinking her prudence impeached—"on my honour—on my most sacred word—I never received a letter from him, or any man breathing!" accompanying this assurance with a flow of tears, which might with greater propriety be attributed to the indignation she felt at being suspected of entertaining a clandestine correspondence, than to any other well-defined feeling. Here the old man affectionately took her by the hand, crying—

"Cheer up, love—cheer up—no one suspects you—your mother took care you should never—."

"Are you raving, Sir?" said the matron, casting a prohibitory look at her brother, and now alarmed at the near prospect of being detected in her disingenuous conduct towards her daughter.

"*Me* raving?"

"Yes, one would think so, indeed! But your strange and inconsistent conduct is all attributable to your want of knowledge of the world; and a deficiency of tact in matters of such delicacy."

"Why, as to the world," said Crank, marking with a piece of chalk on the floor, the place where Tiller was to screw down the staunchion, to which the foot-clew of Burton's cot was to be suspended—"As to the world—I've been round that twice; then as to tacks or tacking, I'd stay where you couldn't wear:—however, that's all Algebra to you. But as to opening any sealed dispatches, but my own—hang such *delicacy*, say I."

The matron felt that a crisis had arrived of such a nature, that it was almost impossible an explanation should not take place, which would put Burton's conduct in a very different light from that in which it was her interest Emily should view it. Whilst inveighing against the captain's conduct, as the very height of imprudence, accident liberated her from her embarrassment; for at this moment the gate-bell rang, and Senna was soon after seen, leading leisurely his patient past the window. The hospitable old hero-

growling great guns, bustled immediately out of the room to welcome his guest ; whilst the mother, anxious to prevent the effect any eclairsissement might have on her daughter's feelings, contrived to get between her and the door, and thus addressed her—

“ Emily, my dear love, you will, I hope, feel, that in this instance my conduct has been actuated solely by a mother's anxiety for the welfare of her child. The suppression of the letter may seem disingenuous ; but it was of *such* a nature, that I was induced, through regard to *your* feelings, to conceal its receipt.—Your uncle's unsuspecting artlessness saw nothing in it objectionable : yet, I assure you, it contained insinuations which I w^o 'd give the *world*, even now, to be assured had no foundation. If the letter was penned purposely to throw odium on my child, he could not have been more successful ; and if he contemplated the possibility of its falling into my hands, he must be an accomplished villain. I can say no more—time presses—your uncle's absurd obstinacy has entailed his society on us, as a curse.—You are a girl not destitute of understanding—make the best use of it. Be watchful—be vigilant ; and remember the description of the arch-fiend himself, in scripture, is not less applicable to men in quest of fortune, who may be said—‘ to go about like roaring lions, seeking whom they may devour.’ ”

With this piece of advice, forced by the perversion of a text from scripture, not forgetting the accompaniment of a maternal kiss, as is usual on such occasions, to sweeten the pill of parental advice, she released her daughter ; and suddenly assuming a face all smiles, and a manner betokening the deepest interest in the young lieutenant's misfortune, she repaired to the drawing-room, to welcome, with affected cordiality, the man she most feared and hated on earth.

With the details of that reception, or the effect produced on Burton by the kind-heartedness of the old gentleman, by the affected and hypocritical cordiality of the matron, or the quiet, dignified reserve of Emily, we will not fatigue our readers ; who are already sufficiently acquainted with their several characters and motives of action, to pourtray these particulars, by the aid of their

own imagination, with as much truth and effect as could possibly be accomplished by laboured description.

Days rolled on unmarked, except on the part of Crank, by any thing further than an interchange of mutual distant civilities between the females of the family and the invalid.—He was rapidly recovering the effects of his accident, *yet* no opportunity had been, or seemed likely to be, afforded him, of ascertaining the state of Emily's mind.—He felt himself under the jealous surveillance of that most effective engine of domestic policy, a wary mother's eye. Without betraying her object, her whole time was devoted to prevent, by every species of forethought and caution, the young invalid from having a moment of Emily's society alone.—With this view his bell was answered with an alacrity that surprised him; every want was supplied as soon as made known; and it appeared to him not a little singular, that on some of these occasions he could distinguish, by the whispered but authoritative mandate to the servant, when passing her sitting-room, that these attentions were the result of that proud lady's personal regards to his comports; a circumstance which not a little tended to shake his previous conviction, that he was no favourite with her, if not absolutely an object of her dislike or aversion. Tiller, also, who was the medium of all those attentions and little assiduities, and whose jealousy of the lieutenant had very much abated, through a feeling of commiseration, found himself established on a footing of favour, of which, to speak the truth, he had never been ambitious. As, however, he was a fellow of tough principle, and sturdy manner, it never entered Burton's head to make use of him as a confidant; although he felt it every day became more necessary that he should secure some medium of privately communicating with the object of his hourly increasing passion. Like other persons in his situation, he was sanguine enough to hope that accident would have thrown such opportunities in his way. In this belief, however, he found himself deceived; and he now discovered that the maxim was no less true in love than in war—"He that would win fortune, must woo her." He therefore sedulously turned his thoughts to procure himself the so-

much wished-for opportunity as speedily as possible; more particularly as his rapid convalescence had already furnished, at the dinner-table, a topic with the matron for dexterously, though politely, anticipating his departure from the cottage.

CHAPTER VI.

DOMESTIC POLITICS.

Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike.

POPE.

HOWEVER prudently the matron had digested her plans, it seemed fated that the good feeling of her brother-in-law, should in this, as in many previous instances, prove a serious obstruction to the attainment of her object.—The worthy man had all along sympathized with his young friend, and seemed now more than ever disposed to enlist the feelings of the female part of his family in his favour.—He so far possessed himself by snatches of the details of Burton's misfortune as to disabuse himself of his original error in imagining that the lieutenant was, as he had expressed it, 'another Sky-rocket Jack,' blown up in the Bay of Biscay, and landed in a ditch at Dartmouth.—Yet, strange as it may seem, owing to the pleasure he experienced at seeing his young friend under his roof, and being able to render him a service, forty-eight hours had nearly elapsed ere he was undeceived as to his supposed aerial flight to that part of the country.—After dinner, on the day when Mrs. Crank had so pointedly alluded to the probability of the lieutenant's departure from the cottage, the veteran, as was his custom, challenged his friend to a bumper, which was no sooner filled, than he took the young officer kindly by the hand, and said—

"I'll give you a toast.—Here's success to you in your

profession, and may you soon hear of your appointment to another ship."

Burton felt himself now called on to express himself in appropriate and grateful terms, for the kind and hospitable reception he had experienced; and on this theme, as he really felt much, he perhaps would have been eloquent, had not Crank cut him short, by observing—

"All that's very pleasant in its way, my friend, to those who like it—I can't say *I* do—you're under no obligation, believe me:—but if you think you are, you may square the yards in this way—by giving us the particulars of the loss of your ship."

Burton would fain have declined, but his diffidence to speak of a transaction in which he might have said, with *Æneas*,

"Quæque ipse miserrime vidi
Et quorum pars magna fui—"

was soon overcome by Crank's repeating the request; and an assurance, false as respected one of the persons alluded to, that 'the *women* would be disappointed, as well as himself, unless he began the narration.'

Thus encouraged, he threw off his reluctance to appear egotistical, and proceeded to satisfy their curiosity by a connected detail of the whole transaction; and there is much reason to regret, both for our own sake, as well as the reader's, that none of the party were sufficiently versed in the stenographic art, to have taken down, in short hand, from his own lips, the animated description of the awful peril, alarm, and distressing hardships endured by himself and his companions on that disastrous occasion; satisfied we are, that were it in the reader's power to contrast it with that which we have feebly endeavoured to sketch, our meagre prosaic attempt at describing a scene of such animating interest, would have been considered beneath the style of an official dispatch, and scarcely fit for insertion in the ship's log-book.

Had there been no previous *liaison* between two such susceptible minds, as those possessed by our young friends, the history of such sufferings was likely to excite

a kindly interest, which might possibly have warmed into a fonder feeling.—The narrative, from being at first merely circumstantial, became deeply interesting to all, not excepting Mrs. Crank, who, had she calculated on its results, would never have left it in the power of accident to display, in so favourable a light, the character of a man she had so often, through motives of policy, perhaps, rather than ill will, calumniated.

As the story proceeded, the veteran grew restless and fidgety in his seat, and with difficulty restrained himself from interruption.—Part of the interest was lost on Mrs. Crank, from the anxiety with which she watched the fine expressive features of her daughter, who, like Dido of old, manifested all those alternations of fear, hope, pity, and horror, during this distressing detail, which it is said some thousand years ago (for nature is always the same, and true to itself) agitated the love-lorn Queen of Carthage during *Æneas'* relation of the disastrous conflagration of Troy.—Whatever feelings might have been excited by this recital in other persons, that which was most decidedly serviceable to the views of the narrator, was the interest which the tale of toil and suffering excited in the old officer's breast.—He made, as the lieutenant proceeded, all the young sailor's sorrows his own, and with an enthusiasm natural to his character, the narrative was scarcely concluded, ere he jumped up from his seat, and strutted about the room with a determined air, that seemed to indicate his mind was made up; and his will should be law.—Then looking alternately in the face of Burton and that of his sister, from whom he almost anticipated open opposition, he exclaimed—

“Sad work—burnt out—kit lost—no remuneration !*—perhaps no chance of an appointment,”—then grasp-

* In all cases of shipwreck or loss by fire, the officers and seamen of his majesty's ships are considered as unentitled to remuneration of any kind.—The practice has been complained of as a hardship, but it seems consonant with sound policy.—The conviction of neglect of discipline or precaution, brings its own punishment with it, which is sure to produce the most salutary effects.—Officers in the army, on board transports, are sometimes remunerated under similar circumstances, but their safety is in other hands than their own, and they may be considered, when on board ship, as beings completely out of their element.

ing him parentally by the hand, he said—"but never mind—shall never want a friend in distress ; and what's more, my boy, until you get another ship, you shall remain a supernumerary on the *brooks*, and be victualled at the cottage as long as you like."

A cloud quickly overshadowed the brow of the stately dame, whose opposition was neutralized by the previous demonstration which Crank had made of his resolution.—An open rupture was to be avoided with a man of the veteran's determination of character ; who, wherever his feelings were concerned, usually concluded every argument with the authoritative phrase—"Recollect—I'm captain of my *own* ship."

"This politic lady, therefore, despairing of accomplishing her object by storm, resolved, to use a military phrase, to proceed by sap.—The project was no sooner formed, than, with a dexterity highly creditable to her capacity, she proceeded to put part of it into execution, by adopting the line of conduct most likely to deceive her opponent and lull suspicion.—Her plastic features, with admirable facility, assumed a gracious smile ; and with all the *savoir* of a woman of the world, who felt acquiescence, however unpalatable, would not be impolitic, added her entreaties to those of her brother, that she hoped he would make his stay as long as suited his convenience and interests : observing, "that it was not likely, however, they should have that pleasure long, as it was impossible a gentleman of his professional character and merit would be suffered to remain unemployed."

The countenance of the old gentleman seemed to brighten at this observation—perhaps there was as much of triumph in it as of satisfaction ; and he was heard to mutter—

"Changed her tune, by all that's brave—must have a heart like a horse if she didn't"—a sentiment, in which, but for the coarseness of the allusion, her daughter would probably have participated.

As in the regular drama the acts are closed by the dropping of the curtain,—the interest of this scene was effectively interrupted by *Mister Tiller's* intrusion, to drop

the curtains for the night, which put an end to the conversation, and curtailed our adventurer's grateful acknowledgments.

Although Mrs. Crank perfectly appreciated the value of her own talents ; (as which of us poor mortals do not when we possess them ?) as well as of her tact in extricating herself from any difficulty. she was too sensible of the importance of due examination and reflection, not to look into the scheme her genius had promptly furnished her with, in every possible light — It is not therefore to be wondered at she was extremely taciturn during the rest of the evening, and made indisposition a pretext for retiring early to rest and breaking up the family party.

For several hours her bed was any thing but a place of repose—

—“Not poppy, nor mandagora,
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,”

“could med’cine” her “to sweet sleep,” until day-light broke in upon her unfinished lucubrations.

Baffled as she had been in her calculations by the unexpected return of Burton to the neighbourhood, in consequence of the singularly ill-timed accident, which had thrown him, as it were, on their humanity, and the increased probability of his continuing yet longer an inmate of the house ; she felt still greater cause for alarm, at perceiving he was rapidly establishing his claim to her daughter's esteem, if not affection, through the blind partiality, as she termed it, of her brother-in-law for a poor professional *parvenue*.—In fact, she began to entertain apprehensions that Crank, whose conduct as to the intercourse between the young people had been hitherto characterised simply by indifference, might allow his predilection for his guest to out-balance the scruples which he entertained, as to the ineligibility of so unequal a match. — There was but one safe course to pursue, more especially as she felt convinced it would be almost impossible that some accident should not apprise her daughter of Burton's last letter being suppressed, which would produce the double effect of raising his character, and depressing her own in Emily's

estimation.—To prevent such an *eclaircissement* was her object night and day ; yet she was unable to flatter herself that, should he remain in the house, opportunities would not occur for explanation, and exposing the deception practised on her unsuspecting child. With the intrusion of dawn, she had come to the determination that her only chance of safety must consist in expelling this dangerous guest from the house by some *tour-d'artifice* or stratagem: and ere she had completed her devotional exercises of the morning ; or the still more devoutly observed ceremonials of the toilette, she had adjusted the whole plan of operations, and nicely calculated the chances of success.

Although sleep had been altogether a stranger to her pillow, no one who had marked the self-possession and calmness which sat upon her countenance, as she entered the breakfast-room in the morning, would have conjectured that the fever of ambition had, during the live-long night, banished all repose ; or that, notwithstanding the air of easy indifference she assumed, she was actually devising how she could ward off, by one piece of duplicity, the consequences of another.—

A favourable opportunity presented itself for the completion of her project ; for, immediately after breakfast, Miss Wilson called on her daughter, and both soon after repaired to make some morning calls in the neighbourhood.—Observing that the coast was clear, and calculating on the usual tediousness of these tiresome testimonials of fashionable regard, she seized the fortunate chance thus afforded of putting her plan into instant execution, and sallied forth—Will it be asked where ?

CHAPTER VII.

SECRET SERVICES.

He knew not how to reconcile
Such language, with her usual style,
And yet her words were so exprest,
He could not hope she spoke in jest.

SWIFT.

Here was an honourable compromise,
A half-way house of diplomatic rest.—

BYRON.

THE portly village doctor was busy, pestle in hand, pounding cuttle-fish shell to form a dentifrice for the identical lady who now entered the apartment; which alternately served him as study, surgery, laboratory, and sometimes dissecting-room. Luckily, at this moment, Master Robert Rufus, his associate in the healing art, was absent: his professional assistance having been solicited by Lady Deborah Outang, in behalf of a sick monkey, whose thread of existence had been considered in great danger from the scissors of *Atropas*; owing, as it was supposed, to a sudden and alarming attack of paralysis.

"Dear me, doctor,—I consider myself particularly fortunate to find you thus alone," said Mrs. Crank, who in her hurry had forgotten to close the door by which she entered.

The doctor, after having kindly assisted her to a seat, and returned her greeting, imagining, from her exordium, that one of those mystic communications, not unusual between some patients and their medical men, was on the tapis, cautiously crept on tiptoe to the door, which he closed with an affected mysteriousness suited to the occasion—

"I am obliged, doctor, for this considerate caution. Since the decease of my sainted husband, my affairs are secret to all the world, with the exception of yourself."

A profound bow of acknowledgment followed this complimentary confession.

"Secrecy, my dear Madam, is the soul of the profession ; and, let me add,—its safeguard also."

"How admirably expressed !"

"You are pleased to compliment, Madam."

"Impossible !—compliment always implies flattery—your merit challenges commendation."

The opening of this eulogistic battery, or royal salute, seemed for a moment to stagger the doctor. Rubbing his hands with infinite delight, he made a closer approach to the lady's person. He had hitherto considered himself a favourite with her ; and in that conviction he had been encouraged by many well-timed condescensions ; in most instances slight, but betokening a preference for his society as a professional man, who understood the value of pliability of character ;—a quality which ladies, like his fair visitant, proportionally prize in others. But this unwonted strain of exaggerated encomium, combined with her secrecy of manner, threw him completely off his guard ; and his anxiety to arrive at the mysterious truth had well nigh involved him in the indiscretion of professionally alluding to a slight obesity of habit, which he had hitherto attributed to sedentary avocations. A leading question, as to the state of her health, was on the tip of his tongue, which would inevitably have damned him for ever in her good opinion ; had not the lady, whose affairs were of too pressing a nature to tolerate either circumlocution or misconstruction, set him right ; and hurried directly to acquaint him with her object.

"But to address myself to the particular point upon which I wish your advice : you are aware," continued she, "of the unfortunate situation in which I'm placed."

Here the doctor protested his innocence with a face in which it was impossible to say whether incredulity or surprise most predominated.

That attachment which you cannot but have suspected—"

"Me, dear Madam," interrupted Senna, "never up to this hour."

"No ? upon your veracity ?"

"No, on my honour," exclaimed the kindling apothecary, "I assure you. On the respect, on the deep regard let me add, which I trust," said he, flinging himself from his seat on his knees before her, "I have uniformly evinced towards you——"

"Pardon, me, doctor," interrupted the lady, reining in her condescension as she began to be apprehensive that its cause was misunderstood; "you appear to labour under a misconception—rise, Sir."

There were two professional words in the last sentence, which completely set the doctor's intellects obstetrically wandering. For whom, or to whom the allusion was intended, he still was at a loss; but having made one capital error, he was determined not to blunder again, so he patiently waited to take up his cue.

"That *unfortunate* attachment which I always dreaded might result from the growing intimacy of the parties; an intimacy which had happily been interrupted, if not for ever forgotten, but for the absurd obstinacy of that indomitable mon—(but I'll not use a harsh term) man, Captain C., is more than likely to baffle all my attempts to quench it, unless fresh measures be devised."

Senna, still at a loss, looked unutterable things, but said not a word.

"All that caution, or prudent concealment"—Here, again, Senna involuntarily started, and seemed relapsing—

"Could do," resumed the lady, "has been done; but things are now gone too far, unless you kindly assist us."

Senna, in his mind's eye, had already taken a retrospective glance over the whole body of pharmacy, or, as it is technically called, the *Pharmacopæia Londinensis*, for what purpose was best known to himself, then turning round with a face of the most servile obsequiousness, he answered—

"You know, my dear Madam, you may command my services to any extent."

"So I felt confident," said she; "and, to be candid with you, doctor, every thing must now depend on your ingenuity. You know, I'm sure, that these things have been done before."

"Oh, constantly, my dear Madam!—every day. Well, but to come to the point—"

"Yes," replied she, but still hesitated to proceed.

"Would it not be as well," rejoined the apothecary, "to apprize me of some of the *leading* symptoms."

"Symptoms!—symptoms!" reiterated Mrs. Crank.

"I fear, doctor, you have not comprehended my meaning—explicitness becomes a duty, although delicacy towards my daughter forbids me to disclose her situation. But to you, as a friend of the family, and who have so often kindly expressed that interest which I am certain you feel in our welfare, I trust I may candidly avow *that*, which, to living being, except yourself, should never have escaped my lips."

Here was fresh food for wonder; his eyes dilated, his nostrils were distended, and his patulous ears seemed to suck intelligence instinctively, at every syllable as she proceeded.—The lady perceiving, from the sudden alteration of his countenance, that he had already anticipated some unwarrantable inference, as respected her daughter's fair fame, resumed—

"But mark me! doctor,—that neither my daughter's conduct nor principles are to be impugned—nor do I imagine, brought up, as she has been, with all the aid of moral and religious instruction, which it has been my pride to infuse from her earliest infancy, that it would be possible she should ever forget what is due to herself and her family."

This sermonizing tirade was so far from throwing any light upon the person intended to be enlightened, that he fell into a conviction opposite to that which the matron intended should have been the effect of her eloquence; and, as is natural under such circumstances, he now attributed all this circumlocution to an anxiety natural on the part of a parent to palliate a daughter's imprudence.

"You should, doctor, be apprized—"

A thundering bump at the door, occasioned by the application of the nether extremity of Mister Robert Rufus's person on the outside, in consequence of his finding the latch refused its office, fortunately interrupted the confabulation, which, from its want of point, might otherwise

have carried far enough to fatigue the impatience of the reader.

Senna flew from his seat in a passion—and, like the “true blood of Cæsar,” was seen

— “ Rushing out of doors to be resolved
If Brutus so unkindly knocked or no :”

and in the eagerness of the one to intrude, and the other to repel the invasion. their heads came slap in collision with a force, which, had the *os frontis* of either been less strongly fortified by nature, or the cerebral matter of a more tender and susceptible substance, might have afforded an opportunity to the other practitioner of trepanning the sufferer's skull, and in the attempt perhaps “eased” him, to speak poetically, “of this load of life.”

This interruption recalled the interlocutors to a sense of the value of fleeting time, and of the probability that the thread of their communion might be again unseasonably broken off. As soon, therefore, as the luckless wight had been despatched by Senna with a reprimand, Mrs. Crank, dismissing the small remnant of *mauvaise honte* which lingered in her nature, proceeded, in a more business-like manner, to state the reasons of her visit, and detail, in a connected chain, the symptoms (as Mr. Senna, she observed, would have called them) of approaching disorder in the family body. For she, conformably with her peculiar system of action (founded on what are termed approved worldly maxims), had always considered and treated love as a species of contagion—if not the plague itself. Dissenting from the enlightened *medico-philosophers* of the day, who have alarmed the southern maritime states of Europe, by the innovating principle that the plague is not contagious : her principle of action was diametrically opposite, from entertaining the firm conviction and belief, that as no attachment could take place between parties without coming in collision, so the contagion, however violent, must cease to propagate itself, and finally be extirpated, provided the enamoured pair were carefully removed from the possibility of coming into future contact. From the symptoms enumerated, she

was compelled to admit, that, as respected her daughter, these were not of so decided a character ; though she was rather disposed to attribute their being checked, to her own judicious method of treating them in their early stage :—whilst she regretted, in terms of deep anxiety and alarm, that the disease displayed itself with a virulence and violence in the male subject, which threatened infection in its worse shape ; and bid fair to defeat all her anxious precaution.

Senna protested, and possibly with truth, that never during his experience had he witnessed a similar instance of so judicious an adaptation of physical terms to meta-physical subjects ; and concluded his warm compliment to her talent by observing, that she had succeeded in that most difficult of all oratorical attempts, which consisted in making the figures she had so judiciously selected at once illuminative and corroborative of her facts. “ But,” continued the professor of physic, “ having now, *Madam*, got over what we consider the main point, the *nomination* of the disease—the next step is to prescribe a remedy.”

“ There, doctor, you must allow me to intrude on your prerogative. What that remedy is, *I* have, upon the most mature deliberation, resolved.”

“ Just so ; and, give me leave to say, in excellent hands.”

“ To be brief, then. There is every reason to believe, that the unhappy interest which this young man has excited in my brother, both as a professional man, as well as from his late sufferings and accident, will be the means of prolonging his stay, and affording him opportunities of interesting my daughter still more strongly in his favour. You know the value of the proverb—‘Opportunity and impunity.’ ”

“ Just so.”

“ One thing at least is certain, that, beggared as he now is, we shall be saddled with him perhaps for months ; for only yesterday, after the recital of his sufferings at sea, which certainly were, if *true*, rather singular and touching—our perverse but kind friend, *sailor-like*, thought himself called on to offer him an asylum without limitation of

time :—in fact, a *carte blanche* to do as he thought proper, and remain as long as he liked."

"You *don't* say so?"

"Your surprise, doctor, is natural. But such is the fact. Now, this, Sir, I never can endure. It would be a wanton exposure of my dear child to the chance of forming a connexion highly ineligible—in fact, ruinous to her expectations. Only think, my good friend, of such a calamity befalling a girl so calculated to succeed in life as she is by nature; and highly cultivated, as I trust she is, by all the ordinary aids of education and a mother's fond solicitude. It is not to be thought of with any thing like patience.—Flight alone can save us; and resolved I am, that, great as the sacrifice might perhaps be, were my brother to take umbrage at it, my daughter and I, as a last resort, must withdraw ourselves from his roof."

"God forbid, my dear friend!—to be sure, violent diseases require violent remedies. Yet, perhaps, an *alterative* might be administered with success."

"You will excuse me—I feel as a mother, and cannot temporise with my solicitude.—Vigorous measures alone can preserve us—and you have assured me of your kind co-operation."

Again the doctor was destined to be at fault.—But as the innuendo was dreadful and appalling, prudence prompted him to be silent.

"Upon your dexterity and skill, as a professional man, and a man of the world, I implicitly rely.—It is in your power and *your's* only, to remove him!"

The colour deserted every feature of the doctor's bewildered countenance. — He positively gasped for breath at the conclusion of this speech; during which he had been calculating with himself what might be her ultimate aim: But this ambiguous proposal, coupled with the urgency of her preceding appeal, made him doubt whether he had the perfect possession of his faculties.

The speaker was now too much excited, and too anxious to arrive at her object, to permit him to remain much longer in doubt.

"You know," continued she, "how much attached he is to the cottage."

"Who, my dear Madam?"

"Why, surely, you have not been all along ignorant whom I meant—my brother."

"Impossible!--I trust--"

"Why not?" interrupted the matron. "Unless under the impression of a dangerous state of health, and the necessity of trying some other air, I fear it will be impossible to remove him—and even this must be managed with great dexterity—and by-the-by, doctor (I only throw out the conjecture), do you not think he breaks apace?"

"Quite the contrary—I have not seen him look better for years—nor is his improvement confined to looks alone.—His constitution seems renovated, and he perfectly astonished me by the alacrity with which he bustled down here the day of Mr. Burton's accident."

"Appearances may be deceitful—I have nearer opportunities of observing him than you—not that I would impeach your professional skill, for which I have the highest respect—but from certain appearances,—*minute* certainly, and almost indescribable; I venture to give it as my decisive opinion, that he is on the eve of some important change for the worst."

"I confess my observations lead me to a different inference—more particularly as he has been taking the '*preventive drops*.'"

"Of drops, or of medicine, I have little hope—perhaps, already he has taken too much.—Change of air,—change of scene, doctor, seems most likely to accomplish our object."

"Oh!" drawled out the doctor, with unaffected surprise, as if awakening from a dream—"I now, for the first time, perceive your drift—pardon the phrase—I should rather have said—the a—purport of your first a—intentions."

"Well, excuse me,—but from your doubtful manner, it appeared to me that *this* was not one of your *bright* mornings.—But to resume,—don't you think it would be advisable to order him to Bath, or say Cheltenham—it is matter perhaps of indifference—change of scene being of as much consequence as any thing else in this instance?"

"Why—wh—y a—as to the policy of the thing, I

don't dispute it may be necessary—but I should rather the suggestion came from any *one* else.—You'll please to recollect, my good Madam, that professional *reputation* is something with the world—to me every thing—I flatter myself *my* treatment has been judicious, and, give me leave to add, eminently successful—considering his habits of life.”

“All that, my dear Sir, we don't dispute.”

“I feel your kindness in that admission—But you must be aware of the effect *my* giving him up will create abroad—its unfavourable impression as to my skill—and that, too, at the moment when he is on the eve of a cure.—It was only the other day he was proposing to remove the bandage from his leg, alleging he felt it unnecessary. But *I*, as a matter of *pure* precaution, could not possibly listen to it—Besides—this would be to relinquish a triumph into the hands of the next medical man he may consult, who will thus avail himself of all the judicious treatment which I have so long practised, with almost a certain hope of completely renovating his constitution.—See, Madam! the sacrifice I must thus make, both as to the gratitude which he must feel he owes me for my exertions, and the still more important sacrifice of my professional reputation: which latter is the greater, from the very circumstance of recommending a change of air:—which, you yourself are well aware, the world now very uncharitably begins to consider the surest symptom of a medical man's *despair* of his patient; and an inhuman abandonment of him to his fate, as though death were inevitable.—You, Madam, can see no reason; at least, I see none, strong enough to induce me so wantonly to sacrifice reputation.”

“Oh! certainly, by no means.”

“Yet,” continued the doctor, rising in tone as well as in importance of manner, as if warmed by his own eloquence, “character is coin.—Besides, there is something due to the feelings of the old gentleman—what will he think of being so unceremoniously handed over to strangers? Did my practice permit it, or could my other patients be *reconciled* to my absence, I might, by accompanying him, remove some of the objections.—Then—

Will he submit to the treatment of strangers, with all the reluctance he has manifested to medicine, and his contempt of professional advice? The difficulties I have experienced in this respect, have, as you well know, Madam, only been overcome by his considering me, for some time past, more in the light of a friend, than a physician.—But, above all, should he detect, or but suspect the imposition practised on him; it is pretty evident I shall forfeit for ever his good opinion and confidence.”

“All you have said, Sir,” said Mrs. Crank, with a smile; which was half of a sneer, “is very plausible; and I properly appreciate your tenderness for Captain Crank’s feelings.—But I imagine it will not be difficult to calm all that amiable anxiety you have expressed for him,—by one word, and in thus alluding to it *now* distinctly, it will save me the trouble, and you the embarrassment, of its being *again* rung in your ears—which is, that whatever *sacrifice* you may imagine you make, in relinquishing the captain as a patient, shall be amply remunerated, I give you my solemn assurance.—And now, Sir, it remains for you to decide—and it is only candid to apprise you, that the decision will be important as well to your own interests as to ours—for taking a high authority in this instance as my guide, I shall determine—‘he that is not *for* us, is *against* us.’”

The dreams of an armed neutrality, in which the doctor had hugged himself, were by this talismanic touch of female artifice dissipated into “thin air.” As a man, who had entrenched himself in a strong hold, which he hitherto imagined impregnable, surrenders at discretion, the moment he is surprised by finding the enemy in the citadel; so the pharmacopolist, who had fortified himself in professions of feeling, and flourishes of declamation, which he supposed were insurmountable; the moment he became apprehensive that his interest was at stake, wisely determined to beat the *chamade*, and capitulate in time, ere matters came to extremities.

“Well, my dear Madam, it must be confessed it’s a case of difficulty—but we must see what can be done. I consent to postpone a—my interests—your’s shall be—*a*—paramount;—and, give me leave to add, the sacrifice

AN EXPLANATION.

a more meritorious, as your assurances, however
y meant, have certainly been but obscurely defined :
your present assurance, I shall, however, implicitly
”

With an address worthy of the best days of Italian di-
nacy, the lady simpered, and affected a slight confu-
sion; expressing, in a softened voice, her surprise at his
perceiving that, circumstanced as she was, delicacy
must prevent her being more explicit.

Cerberus himself was never taken with so palatable a
p :—The victory was complete ; and the man was her
own, *body and soul.*

CHAPTER VIII.

AN EXPLANATION.

They were alone once more.
Byron.

It has become an adage in human affairs that “man
proposes, Heaven disposes”—a truism so general, that
it is embraced even the case of Mrs. Crank, although
a *female*—for while she was thus providing against
possible future ill, that occurrence which it had been all
along an object nearest her heart to prevent, actually took
place.

In consequence of not finding at home the greater num-
ber of those acquaintances on whom she called, Emily hav-
ing parted with her friend near that lady’s residence, return-
ed earlier than by her vigilant mother had been expected
and had sat herself down in the drawing-room, when the
lieutenant entered, pleasure beaming in his eye ; the re-
sult of those hopes and anticipations which now “this
fluttered” round his heart. This was the first time
had, since his abode at the cottage, seen Emily alone
even for a moment ; and as it was naturally to be expe-

ed that such an occurrence should long since have taken place by accident, he began to imagine that the interdiction of her society in private must be the result of design ; although still rather dubious as to its author. He had, however, calculated on the opportunity certainly occurring within a much shorter period than that which had elapsed since his stay ; and, as is natural, under circumstances where a much desired event, is unaccountably postponed, he considered the chance daily improved, until he now felt convinced it approximated to certainty. As he was unconscious of any slight towards the object of his affections, he felt more sensibly the value of an opportunity of an explanation, which might, he trusted, remove that reserve which marked her conduct towards him ; and restore that happier intimacy and friendly cordiality which formerly subsisted between them. It was not wonderful, therefore, that every day which intervened seemed too short, because it afforded no such opportunity : whilst, as he added it to the number of those already spent in doubt and anxiety since becoming an inmate at the cottage, the aggregate of time appeared to him intolerably long and tedious.

It may easily be conceived that, in this situation of mind, the lieutenant was not disposed to let the present opportunity be lost. Notwithstanding the anxiety he felt to put an end to these perplexities, yet now, when alone with the woman he adored, he found the task of attempting an explanation fraught with difficulties he had never before attributed to it. There seems to be a busy demon ever in the path of lovers, even of the purer order ;--and possibly more frequently with such persons than with spirits of less exalted sentiment, whose constant office it is to create misunderstandings which should never have arisen between rational beings, to conjure up those tormenting and unappeasable sensations, which arise from too scrupulous an exaction of attention, too refined an idea of human nature, or too subtle and intrusive a feeling of self-respect. Of these three just mentioned, women appear to be haunted by the two former ; whilst the last, which, by-the-bye, like all other sensations founded on self, is the more difficult to overcome, starts up like a spectre to scare the male sen-

timentalist from his object ; and render him the victim of his own overweening refinement. On this rock (to exchange the figure, since Burton was not an immaterialist) he found himself most likely to strike ; in consequence of entertaining an idea, that were he the first to demand or entreat an explanation, it might be thence inferred that he felt conscious something in his conduct had occasioned that reserve which he so much regretted. Never, perhaps, had this intermeddling spirit been more effectively busied in disturbing the good understanding and harmony which subsisted between two persons, who previously esteemed each other, than in the present instance. One difficulty, which, however, had been considered insurmountable, and that too with reason, was removed, and both parties had now an opportunity of communicating freely and explaining their sentiments without the intervention of a third person. The next difficulty to be removed was, who should concede the point, and begin the explanation, which, between two persons who separately felt they had nothing wherewith to upbraid themselves, was one of rather difficult adjustment. In the middle of deliberations of this nature the clock struck 'four,' and the last stroke of the bell awoke him to a sense of the value of those moments he was thus wasting in subtle and futile casuistry, and reminded him that the summons for dinner might be momentarily expected. He felt the importance of this opportunity for explanation—his scruples were overbalanced by his anxiety. By singular good fortune he happened to touch accidentally the magic spring, which was certain to open a road from that labyrinth in which he was involved.

"May I ask," said he, "to what am I indebted for the pleasure of now, for the first time during so long a residence in this house, enjoying *one* moment of your society alone?"

"I was not," replied Emily, with dignified reserve, "aware that such an opportunity would be particularly prized by Mr. Burton."

"This is indeed injustice. The value I have set on every moment I have enjoyed of your society, may be es-

minated by the solicitude I have always shewn to obtain it."

"I must be excused," said Emily, "If I think it very doubtful that solicitude still exists."

"Good heavens!" said he, "what can you mean? In what part of my conduct have I merited that reproach? An explanation is of the utmost importance to my peace of mind; can you harbour any suspicion of the sincerity of my attachment?"

"It is not my wish, Sir, nor ever has been my habit to take up lightly any suspicion as to those I esteem."

"For that admission I feel deeply grateful," said he, interrupting the unfinished sentence, which she recommenced thus,—

"But having admitted this, you cannot but be aware, there are circumstances connected with your abrupt departure for sea, which might have appeared to require some explanation. That occasion is very likely forgotten; and, as respects myself, it would perhaps be as well it continued so."

"It is," replied he, "as fresh in my recollection as every other circumstance in the slightest degree connected with you. I however had hoped my letter would have induced you to accept my explanation of my rather singular and abrupt retreat that evening."

"That letter," said the blushing girl, with something like disdain mingled with confusion in her manner, "it would have been more to your own honour, as I have been assured, had it never been written."

"Then you have been deceived," said the indignant lieutenant, "*grossly* deceived. It contained only an apology, couched in the most respectful terms a grateful heart could dictate. Never! oh, never could I be base enough to insult the woman I adore. My soul scorns the imputation; and, depend on it, lovely Emily, both that note, and the long letter I wrote you, when at sea, were effusions worthy of the most honourable and ardent attachment."

"What letter?" said she with an eagerness of manner which absolved her from all possible suspicion of affect-

ing a surprise she did not feel. "I know of no other letter ever received from you at sea."

"Then, without doubt, both have been intercepted," said he, "and, probably, by the same hand. Ought I to wonder at your coldness? I must, indeed, have appeared to merit your deep displeasure. How have we both been deceived!"

A flood of light broke in on Emily's mind; the supposed detected clandestine correspondence, alluded to by her uncle; her mother's jealous vigilance; Burton's deep melancholy; were all accounted for. She was now in the road to acquire more accurate information. Burton was relieved from the odium under which he had so long, and so undeservedly laboured; and although the *tête-à-tête* was disturbed by the announcement of dinner, ere he had an opportunity of detailing all the contents of the suppressed correspondence, he failed not to acquaint her with details enough to re-instate himself in her favour, and embolden him, ere he left the apartment, to snatch her hand to his lips—a regale which, it is not improbable, had more relish for him, than all the more substantial luxuries that awaited him in the dining-room.

CHAPTER IX.

NOLENS VOLENS.

"The crocodile with wat'ry eyes,
O'er man, and ev'ry creature cries;
Then feeds, with pleasure, on his prey—
So hypocrites their friends betray."

IN order to account for Burton's having enjoyed a *tête-à-tête* with his fair enslaver, without interruption, it would be necessary only to mention that the coxswain had previously been summoned by his master, to form part of a *tête-à-tête* of another description, in the veteran's own room.

Since the lieutenant had taken up his residence at the cottage, although a salute from the battery in the garden had been duly fired on different anniversaries of celebrated events ; yet, somehow or other, it had so happened, that owing to the accident of his guest, and partly to the pleasure the old gentleman derived from the constant society of his intelligent young friend, no day had been expressly set apart for festive entertainment at Camperdown. Crank, whose respect for old customs was little short of idolatry, became surprised at first, and gradually began to feel alarmed at the consequences to his character amongst his neighbours, of this neglect to collect his friends round the hospitable board, on regularly prescribed occasions. Encouraged by his own state of health, which he now considered sufficiently flattering to warrant him in making, as he termed it, ‘a comfortable night of it,’ and the perfect recovery of his young friend, he had that morning come to the resolution to fix the fifth day of the month for regaling his intimate friends at dinner, and initiate Burton in the jovial ceremony of a JUBILEE, on the anniversary of the discovery of the Gunpowder Treason.

The selections of the guests ; their seats according to rank ; the choices of viands ; and, above all, the disposition of the *troops*, for so he always designated the wines, had been settled in solemn conclave, with almost as much gravity and ceremony as the election of a pope in that august assembly ; when the ringing of the gate-bell notified the approach of the medical man of the family, who immediately joined the captain. He had scarcely entered ere he commenced his arduous attempt to redeem the pledge he had given to that lady, who, in more senses than one, might be designated as his mistress.

“ Bless my soul ! ” said Senna, affecting surprise, and assuming, as he approached his patron, an expression of anxious concern—“ What’s the matter ?—dear me ! I couldn’t think it possible the countenance could so sensibly alter in so short a period ! ”

“ Egad ! I seem to astonish every one,” said Crank, with a chuckle—“ even Thomas, this morning, when

dressing me," remarked that he thought I was quite another man."

"Another man, *indeed*, Sir," said Senna, gravely.—

"You don't like to see it, I suppose," returned Crank, on observing Senna shake his head, and compress his lips with no little assumption of medical mystery—

"Indeed I don't, Sir!" deeply sighed Senna.

"Come, now, that's candid—d—d unlike your profession—I like a man to be above board in every thing—I'm sure you wouldn't believe *me*, if I was to swear I prefer *peace* to war—for though they've shoved me on the shelf, I should be cursed sorry to see our men-o'-war dismantled, and laid up in Rotten Row."

As the latter pronounced the word Rotten, the doctor threw up the palms of his hands, and appearing to sigh deeply, said—

"Oh, Sir! that phrase has brought an unhappy association of ideas into my mind."

"What phrase?"

"No matter, Sir—we must endeavour to make the best of it.—Permit me, pray, to feel the pulse."

"Why, hang it, man, don't I tell you I never was better in my life!—I sleep well, drink well, eat well, and now, begin to walk well—and what's more—in a great measure, I attribute this favourable turn in my health, to—(for you know I never mince matters—I'm always above board) to forgetting, for this last fortnight, to take your physic,"—continued the veteran, with evident glee at having it in his power, thus jocularly, to *hull* (as he termed it) the doctor with a shot in return.

"There it is, my good Sir: you've at once accounted for it all!" exclaimed Senna, with an air of triumph, not unmingled with reproach.—"How could you do such injustice to yourself and fond family, as to neglect the alterative system, and decline the use of the preventive drops?—Now, Sir, I entertain the most serious apprehensions, and the countenance itself clearly indicates it—that the paroxysm, which is approaching, as I perceive, will attack you with redoubled fury."

"Well—you are cursedly positive, Senna.—Why, I

tell you, man, I have not been so well for these five years past!"

"So much the worse!—I'm sorry for it—the more danger is to be apprehended.—A period of good health," continued he, with monotonous emphasis,—"*is frequently the—a precursor of some very dangerous malady.*"

"How the devil do you make *that* out?" said Crank, warmly, who appeared impenetrable to the apothecary's logic.

"Simply enough," quoth the doctor, who appeared perfectly prepared for his subject.—"Now, for instance—as there's no better way of briefly illustrating *the thing* to a sea-faring man—"

"Sea-faring man!" interrupted the veteran, with rising indignation—"Naval officer, if you please, Mister Senna—"

"Well,—as I said, there is no better way of illustrating the medical meaning—or rather apparently paradoxical—bless my soul, how the pupils of the eyes are dilated!—apparently paradoxical—(I hope there's no determination of blood to the head) paradoxical, I was saying, transitions of this nature, than in this simple way—the great secret of science, you know, is to simplify solutions—for instance, as a seaman (I beg your pardon)—a naval Officer—"

"No offence, seaman's a name a man needn't be ashamed of; but no more of your sea-faring men, if you please."

"Well, then, as a seaman—you know, you are always prepared to expect a calm will be succeeded by a storm!"

"Why, sometimes, to be sure."

"This—a phenomenon with respect to animated nature—is, I assure you, strictly applicable to the human frame. And though, my good Sir, your feelings may flatter you into an erroneous supposition that you are in perfect health at this moment, believe me that, as in the instance of the mariner, there are always in such cases, certain and indubitable indications of approaching mischief, which present themselves to the medical eye, but which are quite lost to the common and unprofessional observer; the sailor and the surgeon both see the work-

ings of animated and inanimate nature, through professional optics, and a focus peculiarly their own."

"There's something in *that*, to be sure," said Crank, whose usual sturdiness now seemed to stagger before the formidable phrases of the man of science. An observer would have said that the captain already appeared a little sceptical of his own state of health.—"However, all I know," continued he, "is, that so well I fancied myself, that——"

"Merely fancy, depend on it, Sir," interrupted Senna.

"Well, God knows—perhaps so. I thought myself so well these few days past, that, egad, I had serious notions of taking the parceling off my leg. You see," continued the veteran, holding up the limb for the apothecary's inspection, "the swelling's all gone down."

"Ah! that, my dear friend, is what I most apprehend. I lament to say that's one of the worst symptoms of the case. I don't want to alarm you unnecessarily, but it proves a—indeed it's a confirmation strong as proofs of holy writ, as your intelligent sister would very properly say, that the treacherous disease is flying about through the system, and has only departed from the limb to lodge itself in some vital part of the frame. Perhaps your appetite is even improved?"

"Excellent!—d—n me, Sir, I can eat like a horse—devour bullock's liver, and saw-dust for sauce—aye, eat a jack-ass, and a hamper of greens."

"Ah, there it is—just as I suspected. I always augur unfavourably, in all cases, of that species of unnatural craving of the stomach. Any swimming of the head?—any visual obstruction?—dizziness in the sight?"

"No, not the least."

"Humph, not *yet*.—Ah! well—perhaps my palliatives—though precaution will, perhaps, be best—for, indeed, I fear now, medicine, after your long neglect of my prescription, will be of little avail. We *may*, perhaps, check the severity of the fit."

"Why, by George, Senna," exclaimed Crank, with considerable warmth, jumping upon his legs, and strut-

ting about the room with vigorous strides, as if to convince his despondent adviser how erroneous were his ill-omened apprehensions—"By George, you'll next want to persuade me I am a *dead* man!"

"Not *yet*, I hope."

Here, there was a mutual pause for some moments.

"You say you sleep well?" resumed Senna.

"Like a ground tier butt, Sir—never start tack or sheet, till Thomas comes to call me in the morning; and you know, some few weeks since, half the night long, I was tumbling and tossing about in my bed, like a collier in a cross sea."

"Ah! all confirm my suspicions. Believe me, my dear friend, that a—that apparent soundness of repose is quite *artificial*—an unnatural stupor—a sure forerunner (if not of approaching apoplexy itself) of a determination of blood to the head."

"Determination of blood!—d—n—n, it seems if you were *determined* I should have no blood left in any part of my body. If it's a *job* you want, say so at once—and I'll endeavour to find you a patient to practise on."

"This excitement, captain—this positiveness on your part, if you will only have the kindness to be patient, I shall prove to your satisfaction—"

"Satisfaction, indeed!" interrupted the veteran—"pretty *satisfaction*, to persuade a man in good health that he's in danger of dropping down dead every minute."

"Just so; and if you will only permit me, I'll convince you that there are two descriptions of patients, that are harder to be dealt with than any other beings in the world. There are the hypochondriacal, for instance, who fancy themselves troubled with every disease incidental to the human frame. Then, again, there are your pulmonary patients—people afflicted in the last stage of consumption, who, positively, at their last gasp—not that I mean, my good Sir, to insinuate that your lungs are at all touched."

"No, I believe not—I think if it came to *hailing* the main-top in a hurricane, we'd soon see whose lungs were in the best kelter. I never wanted a trumpet—why, Sir, in that heavy hurricane, that the *Centaur* foundered in—"

"Pardon the interruption. I assure you I don't mean

to assert that you have any tendency to phthisis—that is, —any predisposition to pulmonary affection—I only wish to—a—illustrate my position, by drawing a parallel with your present; or rather fast approaching disorder, with that of those afflicted with that insidious disease. Why, Sir, I've known a man, ten minutes before he breathed his last—departed—as your amiable sister would say, from this sublunary world—grasp me affectionately by the hand, and assure me, that he hoped in a few days he would be able to mount his horse, and pay his first visit to me, his medical man, merely to return thanks in person, for what he was pleased to term my professional attention. Well, Sir, he died, poor man, before I left the house. This will suffice, I should think—not that it is a *very* close parallel to your case—to convince you how little are men aware of their proximity to danger in treacherous, and, give me leave to add, diseases of a self-flattering nature.”

“Well, but surely,” said Crank, “you don’t mean to say, that *mine* is a case of this nature?”

“Just so—and one far more treacherous, than troublesome to the patient.—But, Sir, to convince you that I am not actuated by any sordid selfishness (and I am sure it could be only in joke that you just now hinted a job was my object)—”

“No, no,—nothing more than a joke,” interrupted the veteran, “it’s *my* way,—you know.”

“Just so; but to convince you of the sincerity of my motives—I am now about to propose, as the only chance I see to—to—in fact, *save* you in time—(for why should I blink the business to a man, who has met death in every shape)—to order you, immediately, for change of air—for you know, when physic fails, we have no other alternative—to one of our most celebrated watering places.”

“Watering places!—what, leave the cottage?”

“Yes, and proceed immediately to Cheltenham, and commence a regular course.”

Here Crank, with a face flaming with anger, broke away from him, and flourishing his right hand aloft, whilst he hitched up his breeches waist-band with the other, he shouted aloud—

"I shall do *no* such thing, Sir—pretty pass indeed, to begin and drench me now with salt-water, because I've not had enough of it in my day."

The doctor was certainly not an original or first-rate actor ; but, like other persons of his class, give him his cue, and he was an excellent second. A melancholy interest overshadowed his rubicund visage, as he pathetically gazed on the veteran ; and the visual orbs were suffused with the briny test of *affectionate* concern : whether the effect of the last pinch of snuff being taken by the eyes, instead of the nose, or of an onion concealed in the sleeve of this treacherous crocodile, is left to the intelligent reader to determine. With that hiccup of grief, not unusual under strong emotion, the wily tragedian thus expostulated with the friend he was labouring to deceive.

"Well—my dear—friend—I—can only—only say—and—sorry I am—," added he, extracting his white pocket-handkerchief,—“the imminent urgency of your case compels me to speak so explicitly—and—indeed alarmingly—’tis the only chance remain—remaining for your life.”

Here his words were quite choked with well-dissembled sorrow, and the handkerchief duly applied to extract the far-famed ‘Irish Blackguard’ from his tearful eye.—The painful smart being abated, he assumed more composure—

“As a professional man—I solemnly declare—I—Affection—my dear friend—will unman, you see, the stoutest hearts,” said Senna, sobbing.

“Well ! well !—I need no other proof to assure me of your friendship—cheer up—cheer up—I’ll willingly do whatever you desire—but pray, my good fellow, don’t frighten the women about me—you needn’t say, I’m as *bad* as I am.—Bless me !—Sure enough—there now I feel that—that dizziness in my eyes.”

“Ah, Sir, it only surprises me,” exclaimed the arch hypocrite, “you didn’t perceive it before.”

The good hearted old fellow might, more properly, have attributed this sensation in the eyes to the overflowing of his gratitude, at finding his health the object of such deep solicitude to his friend.—But he was doomed to be



truce, and what simple spirit, like his, could have fared better, when opposed to professional science, combined with woman's art?

"Well, don't frighten poor Emily, it 'ill break the child's heart—you'll promise you won't," said Crank, grasping Senna by the hand; "say the trip will do us *all* good—and tell—tell—poor Burton, you know we can drop him near his home."

CHAPTER X.

DIPLOMACY DEFEATED.

All men's intrigues and projects tend,
By several courses, to one end :
To compass, by the prop'riest shows,
Whatever their designs propose ;
And that which owes the fairest pretext
Is often found the indirect'st.

BUTLER.

CRANK, who was a creature altogether of first impressions, and, under all circumstances, made it a rule to go straight to work, betook himself at the conclusion of this colloquy, to his own chamber, where he passed the remainder of the afternoon in privacy.

What was the motive for his thus absenting himself, contrary to his custom, when there were visitors at the cottage, may be, perhaps, imperfectly surmised from the hurried manner in which he thrust into his *scrutoire* a bundle of papers, an account-book, and a sheet of paper, scrawled over with calculations from one end to the other.

It may therefore be inferred, that the intimation given by his medical friend had not been lost on him : and that although he, like others in his situation, shared in that unaccountable disinclination to make a prospective distribution of his property, in the contemplation of an event, which he now imagined probable ; yet he had not failed to employ this interval, in examining into the state of his in-

come, and classifying his papers, in order to facilitate the task of making his will, whenever that important arrangement should be rendered absolutely necessary.

Whilst the veteran had been thus silently occupied in these suitable and peaceable pursuits, the doctor, as had been preconceived, sought out, and found, the grand mover of this scheme of crooked policy ; who was endeavouring to keep herself warm, by perambulating the grounds at some distance from the house. She had chosen this place, as appropriate for their secret communication ; as well because it was remote, and out of ear-shot, as that it had been her custom, frequently before, to repair to this spot with her present companion, to extract from him oral lessons on the practical part of botanical science. There was therefore little reason to apprehend that any suspicion would be excited, as to the real subject of their private conference.

As she observed him approaching, she retreated still further into the shrubbery, where an intervening hedge of laurel completely screened her from observation, through any of the windows of the cottage. Hither the portly professor of medicine followed ; swelling with all the importance of a man, who thinks he has reason to congratulate himself, on the happy completion of a task which has put all his talents to the test. But it seems to be doomed by destiny, that in matters of a complicated nature, our most zealous endeavours are not always attended with success. It was reserved for Senna to feel this truism in all its bitterness ;—for, after taking his lady-love by the hand, and preluding his tale, with a flourishing descant on the difficulties he had had to surmount, and the important services which he trusted he had rendered her, he continued to narrate, with much pomp and self-complacency, the arguments used in his expostulation with the veteran. Gradually warming with his subject, as a man naturally does, in detailing a transaction in which he has figured as the prominent actor ; he failed not to anticipate a complete triumph in winding up the conclusion, and laid an unhappy emphasis on the last sentence which escaped the veteran upon that occasion. The words, “ we can drop him near his home,” had scarcely fallen from his lips,

ere she violently withdrew her hand, and removing herself to a distance, continued to scowl on him with an eye that could full well pourtray the mingled emotions of terror and rage, which filled her breast.

"Are *these* the weighty obligations—*these* the important services you have rendered me?" Here all the doctor's self-complacency abandoned him; and he stood bewildered, with unfeigned astonishment, whilst she continued—

"You have only rendered things worse by your interference: had you been mine enemy, and planned them with malicious ingenuity, you could not more successfully have *deceived* the means of defeating all my wishes!"

Senna, who was as yet unconscious of any act of treachery, or want of zeal, in his difficult mission, appeared astounded by this tone of extravagant vituperation, and was incapable of reply for some moments.

In answer, as it were, to the stupid stare of astonishment, which pervaded his features, the lady continued—

"Is it possible you can be such an idiot as not to perceive the incalculable mischief you have done me?"

"Upon my word, Madam," said the doctor, drawing up with dignity—"your conduct so much astonishes me, that I am at a loss to find terms to characterize so unparalleled a piece of ingratitude on your part."

"Say, rather, such a piece of baseness on your's," angrily retorted the dame.

"If there be baseness, Madam, in the transaction, it rests with yourself; the project did not originate with me; and, as far as *I'm* concerned, you have no reason to complain."

"I've every reason, Sir—your bungling has undone me."

"Bungling!" indignantly retorted the doctor, "what do you mean?—I pronounce it a masterpiece!—What, do you think there was no professional talent—tact—and give me leave, Madam, to had *delicacy*, requisite to accomplish a task which I foresaw would be so difficult, and which I had so many personal reasons to decline?"

"Would to Heaven, I had declined your assistance."

"Recollect, Madam, I never *offered* it—you expressly

and earnestly implored it. But what, in God's name, is the drift of all this—where's the mischief done—or who, if there be any, is to blame?"

"Why, yourself," replied the matron.—"What object had I in view, when I solicited your assistance to persuade my brother that change of air was necessary for his health?—Was it not to send that *parvenue* about his business, and break up a connexion so dangerous to me and my daughter's interests. But you have entailed him on us as a companion on the journey; and, what is infinitely worse, proposed that we should go down to his own country, and amongst his own relatives; who, with all his boasting, are, no doubt, beggars like himself—Why not have ordered him to Bath?"

"I acted, Madam, on your own suggestion—Bath, or Cheltenham, seemed indifferent to you. I never knew the young man was from Cheltenham. But this is one of the consequences of all crooked policy; and I wish from my heart I had never undertaken the thankless and difficult task of persuading a man, in a renovated state of health, that his life was in imminent danger, and that nothing but flight could save him: when I knew in my heart that he had better have remained at his own fireside, particularly at this period of the year.—I have been deservedly punished for my imprudence."

The vehemence of the doctor had overcome him, and he now paused for breath. He had, however, shot his bolt; and his wily antagonist had time to recollect her interests, and forget her resentment.

"What is done, cannot be undone," resumed the fair casuist, with affected composure—"we must endeavour to repair the mischief, and avail ourselves of that tact, talent, and delicacy, you seem to pique yourself upon, to persuade him to alter his destination.—Suppose you were to suggest Bath?"

The doctor perceived that, in delicate conjunctures of this nature, he was no match for the female diplomatist.—Besides, he was determined to profit by his late experience, and retreat in time.—It was easy to perceive also, from the altered tone of the lady, that she was well aware

of the difficulties of a second attempt to practise on the old man's credulity.

Senna, however, was resolved to escape the snare, so artfully laid for him.—He called in his feelings, if such they might be called, to his aid; and protested, he never again could be induced to abuse the confidence of his worthy friend, whose implicit reliance, and affectionate manner in their late interview, had positively (for he "owned the soft impeachment" with some confusion) drawn tears from his eyes—

"Your eyes!" exclaimed Mrs. Crank, turning up her own,—"impossible!"

"Impossible, or not, Madam! I've had enough of interfering in these delicate matters with people who do not know their own minds—not to say any thing of the ingratitude of—"

"Does the doctor, Ma'am, dine here to-day?" bawled out Tiller, from behind the hedge.

"Yes," replied his mistress, who was evidently surprised into this invitation through alarm, at imagining that they had been overheard.

Considering the *agréable* nature of their *tête-à-tête*, it may be imagined this invitation *par nécessité*, was accepted nearly in the same spirit of cordiality that characterised the acquiescence of the discarded favourite Wolsey in his royal master's command; when the King, after handing the astonished cardinal the appalling proofs of his treason and ingratitude, sarcastically invites him to their purusal—

"and then to breakfast,—with
What appetite you may."

CHAPTER XI.

LOCAL PREFERENCES.

'Tis *where* we live,
The place does oft those graces give.
WALLER.

It is one of the rules of the drama, that the plot and counterplot should, in all well-constructed pieces, proceed simultaneously together; and it will be perceived that, in this instance, (fact throughout being our basis,) the occurrences themselves corroborate the opinion of the critic.

In conformity with the opinion that the action ought never to be permitted to stand still, the eclairsissement of the lover had taken place, pending the explosion of a plot to defeat all his hopes and happiness. Nor was he destined to suffer singly: the shaft which was aimed at his breast recoiled on the wily archeress; and she already perceived that her project had been foiled by the very means she had adopted to ensure her success.

Immediately after Tiller had announced to the captain that dinner was ready, the old man took his niece aside, and acquainted her with his intention of repairing to Cheltenham. To this measure he was prompted from an apprehension that Senna (notwithstanding the strict injunctions laid on him to the contrary) might incautiously alarm his niece by the mode of communicating this intelligence. Crank, whose delicacy formed no striking feature of his character; not that he was at all destitute of feeling, but that he was above assuming it; had scarcely imparted his project, ere her mother and the doctor sat down to dinner. Enough had thus been communicated to awaken, without satisfying the curiosity of Emily; but the very name of Cheltenham conveyed so many agreeable echoes of pleasure and presumed gratification, that she felt but little solicitous to inquire into his motives.

From the transactions detailed in a former chapter, the reader may imagine that certain parties at table felt themselves but ill at ease ; and though desirous of touching on the subject of the morning's discussion, each was indisposed to broach it, lest they might precipitately betray their motives or the part they had taken.

Emily, who had no reason, in this instance, for concealment, and who now seemed to be on the best possible understanding with Burton, was the first to communicate the intelligence of the proposed trip ; and with an ease and artlessness of manner addressed the lieutenant.

"What think you of our intended trip ? Uncle proposes immediately setting off for Cheltenham !"

"Cheltenham, child ! what possesses you to imagine so ?" indignantly exclaimed her mother.

"Here, ma, is my authority," said Emily, putting her hand familiarly on her uncle's shoulder.

"Yes—True bill," cried Crank ; "I think 'twill do us all good : and, indeed, sister, I don't think you're altogether what you *should* be. What say you, Senna ?"

The doctor, from the specimen he already had of Mrs. Crank's vituperative talents, was not disposed again to come into collision in that quarter, he therefore cautiously couched his reply in general terms.

"Wh—y a change of air, at particular periods of the year, is desirable even to people in health," said he, exchanging intelligent glances with Crank.

"Change of air !" said the matron, affecting surprise, "it appears to be a very sudden change indeed ! But I hope it is only a flight of fancy."

"No, my dear—I'm not that way given—matter o' fact ! Thomas, hav'n't you received order to pack up my traps ?"

"Yes, Sir ; before eight bells to-night," said Thomas, "I shall have every thing stowed under hatches, and ready for starting at day-light, if you like."

"Well !" said Mrs. Crank, maintaining, with unaltered face, her affected surprise at that which she knew was the result of her own machinations ; "it does ~~strike~~ me to be very extraordinary that neither my wishes nor my convenience are to be consulted ; but if it be necessary

to make an excursion for health's sake, we might easily have selected a less dissipated place than Cheltenham."

"Excuse me, Madam," said Burton, "few are better acquainted with the place than I; and I must say, that I consider it a place peculiarly adapted to your habits and turn of thinking. There is no town in England more celebrated for the promotion of religious objects; and it is proverbial for missionary meetings."

Crank, as might naturally be expected, here seemed suddenly to alter his tone, and observed with hesitation—

"Do you know—doctor, I begin to—suspect," rubbing his chin, "I sha'n't like the place."

Senna thought so too, but prudently held his tongue. There was now an important move on the board; Philidore himself might have felt it necessary to hesitate. The matron was an expert tactician at the game. She had, to speak technically, recourse to her 'knight,' who gallantly spurred on his steed to her defence, and 'clapped* a pair of breeches' on her adversary, thus endeavouring to render nugatory a move so decisive, by inquiring, with a *non-chalance* strongly in contrast with the glance she cast at Senna—

"Is there no other air, or waters, which you, doctor, would recommend, as equally salubrious?"

A waiting maid of the commonest capacity might have detected what was passing in Senna's mind at this moment.

It is remarkable, that this was the first instance, either before or since the deluge, where the game of chess was separately contested by three independent parties. The man of science was satisfied it was in his power to checkmate the queen. But his mind misgave him, that, in doing so, he might lose a tower of strength at the board, and as a *stale mate* was in his mind the grand desideratum.

* A decisive move at chess, which it is utterly impossible for any person, not deeply versed in this Asiatic, highly scientific, and, as we are taught to believe by the *literati* of China, antediluvian game, to comprehend the extent and aptitude of this allusion.

tum, and always uppermost in his thoughts, he looked wistfully to his principal for instruction.

It was given at a glance, by the matron's dark eye ; which, it has been already observed, was capable of conveying with the rapidity of lightning, every varied expression.

Doubtless," said Senna, taking the cue : " Bath would be preferable in point of health ; if the ladies could be induced to forego the amusements of Cheltenham."

"Forego !" said Mrs. Crank, with great animation, " certainly."

" Bath !" exclaimed Burton, almost in the breath—" the stupidest place on the face of the globe."

" So I have always understood," said Emily, whose mind was already made up, for reasons which may be shrewdly conjectured.

" Oh yes," continued Burton, " it's the most tea-drinking, gossiping, slanderous spot in his majesty's dominions. Then, as for occupation, except you consent to be chiseled out of your money by day at billiards, for the amusement of the men ; and by night, at cards, for the benefit of snuffy old tabbies, you might as well be in your bed, as venture your nose in public."

Crank, who had now, for the second time since the removal of the cloth, slyly slipped the two fore-fingers of his right hand up his left cuff to note the vibrations of life's pendulum, and had already prophetically augured its approximating cessation ; looked despondingly in his young friend's face, and faintly reiterated—

" I don't think, my dear friend, I shall like *that* place."

" Like it !—impossible Sir," said his informant, who had his own reasons for thus disparaging a place, of which he knew little, but by public report. Detraction, is however, fluent—" You, Sir, could never bear the formality, and insipid monotony of such a life, which consists in a stupid promenade in the pump-room, where you see constantly the same emaciated faces : or in once or twice a week being jolted by a pair of Christian ponies*

* Our ill-used Hibernian brethren, who seem, like the Helotes of old, destined to every degrading duty—sedan-chairmen, paviors and hod-men.

in a chair to the rooms, only to be expelled from thence, just as you have got a pleasant partner in the dance, and begin, as the saying is, to warm to your work—and why?—because it is the rule to close at eleven.”

“Well, I’m sure,” said Emily, with simple earnestness, “I should not like that place.”

The doctor here warmly entered into a defence of regulations, which he contended were rendered indispensable in a place like Bath; where regularity, and early hours were essentially necessary, in consequence of the delicate health of most of its visitors.

“That’s the very reason,” said Crank, “I shouldn’t like to go there. Why, Sir, I should positively fancy myself at Haslar.”*

The young officer’s strictures were so many daggers to Mrs. Crank; who finding the tide set in so strong against her inclinations, wisely determined that it would be imprudent to run the risk of defeat.

Unconscious of the mischief he was making, and its prejudicial consequences to himself, Burton hastened to place, in lively contrast, the attractions of Cheltenham.

“No parallel can possibly be drawn between the two places, which differ as much in the nature of their amusements, as in the features of the country around them. Nothing can be more enchanting than the scenery in the neighbourhood of Cheltenham; and the Malvern hills, so celebrated for the salubrity of the air, rival in beauty the fabled regions of enchantment.”

“You appear quite poetical, Mr. Burton,” observed the lady of the house; “it is natural, therefore, to expect poets deal most successfully in fiction.”

“Though I protest,” answered he, “against your inference as to the charge of fiction; I confess there is food for poetry in the situation, the amusements, and the society of Cheltenham.”

“A plague take the poetry of the place—what sort of people are you to meet?—that’s my maxim.”

“Oh, Sir, you may be assured you will not want for variety,” replied the lieutenant; “the society is constant.

* The celebrated Naval Hospital at Portsmouth.

ly fluctuating, and it is composed of all classes, from the peer of parliament to patients of the plebeian order."

"Well, *that's* something—variety's charming, they say."

"But independently of its society," continued the lieutenant, "the arrangements are admirably suited to the convenience of patients and visitors—you may sit in the open air, in the sun or the shade, as suits the season.—In the walks, and before the libraries, seats are conveniently disposed, so as to afford the invalid an opportunity of viewing the fashionables in the promenade, or admiring the handsome equipages in the street. Here you are sure to meet with men from all quarters of the globe; amongst whom you cannot fail to recognize many old acquaintances."

"Well, my mind's made up," said Crank, "if I *must* try the waters—Cheltenham's the place."

The dye was cast; and as Mrs. Crank well knew the sturdy disposition she had to deal with, she felt it unadvisable to attempt to alter his resolve; unsupported, as she knew she must be, by her powerful auxiliary Senna. That gentleman's determination to preserve his consistency, failed not to be considered by her as an act of base desertion; and as is always the case, where a complaisant friend has swerved from the strict path of truth to a certain extent, and on reflection stops short in his career; or hesitates to commit a fresh outrage against his own character; such an indisposition to gratify the feelings, or support the interest of his ally, is certain to be denounced as an infraction of the league offensive and defensive. Thus quickly had poor Senna (though himself scarcely conscious of it) fallen from his high estate, as the confidential friend of his fair mistress. Already an object of her concealed scorn, she, with her usual penetration, foresaw that though she might still avail herself of his hollow freindship, it might very shortly be necessary to treat him as an open enemy.

CHAPTER XII.

APPOINTMENT AND DISAPPOINTMENT.

Fortune her gifts may variously dispose,
 And these be happy call'd, unhappy those;
 But Heaven's just balance equal will appear,
 Whilst those are placed in hope, and these in fear:
 Not present good or ill, the joy or curse;
 But future views of better, or of worse.

POPE.

INDEPENDENTLY of the matron's severer scruples, the commodore had some vulgar notions of decorum; and was not sufficiently fashionable to prefer travelling on a Sunday; even had there been no penalty, in the way of double tolls, imposed on this irreligious assumption of patrician pride.

Monday morning being fixed for their departure, the work of preparation was not completed in time to permit Mrs. Crank and her daughter to form part of the congregation of Zerubbabel Chapel.

It was now mid day, and there was a quiet repose throughout the whole dwelling, similar to that, which perhaps the reader has often witnessed, during the noontide hours, in a country house.

Mrs. Crank was in her own room, assorting pious tracts, which she had received per waggon; for they were bought for economy's sake, by the thousand; and came down in bales. Their titles were as sententious and captivating to simple eyes, as their object was undisguised: for, throughout them all might be detected the overweening intention to withdraw the lower order from their due allegiance to the church service; and swell the congregations of the '*Faithful*' in the neighbouring meeting houses; of which there were not a few.

Emily, although no particular votary of quietude, had retired also; and was a noiseless inmate of the cottage. She was not unpleasingly, or unprofitably occupied in

reflecting on reflections, which are always sure to afford gratification. The practical part of the science of optics was, just then, her study.—In fact, she was engaged at her looking-glass.

The female domestics, too, were quietly busied, like jealous alchemists, in the culinary laboratory, consulting the peptic precepts of those appropriate professors of gastronomy—Mrs. Glass or Mrs. Raffield; for it was not until a considerable part of the nineteenth century had transpired, that the peptic art rose in public estimation to the dignity of a science; and the triumph of male over female genius was completed, by that innovating blow, which levelled for ever the ancient empire of cooks in their kitchen, through a KITCHENER.

Old Tiller never had been nice in religious observances. Indeed he was generally perceived in a greater bustle than usual on this day of the week.—Though no rival of the village vocalist, he closely followed the example of the parish clerk in opening his tuneful throat *only* on Sunday. They, however, differed in tastes: the sailor was not skilled in psalmody; he, therefore, had the bad taste to reject the venerable version of Sternhold and Hopkins,* for the classic page of Dibdin—the poet laureate of the deep.

Musing, as a man in love so often is wont, over a book which he held open in his hand, though sealed to the sense, Burton's ears were assailed by the harsh tones of the veteran's *factotum*, with a running accompanied on that least musical of all instruments, the knife-board; over whose gritty surface Tiller whisked his knives and forks to the tune of a well-known distich, which, as taken from the old fellow's lips, ran thus:

* "Sternhold and Hopkins had great qualms,
When they translated David's Psalms,
To make the heart full glad;
But had it been poor David's fate,
To hear Tom sing, and them translate,
'Gad it had driven him mad."

*Epigram on a Parish Clerk, by the
Earl of Rochester.*

" You're a haxing for your sea—e—men."

Burton pricked up his ears—he knew the predilections Tom felt in common with his master for the old school; and their unmitigated contempt for the innovations of modern mariners.—His curiosity therefore increased, whilst the vocalist resumed—

" But your seaman they be far—"

The rest of the verse was not audible.—The lieutenant was now fully convinced that Tom's muse was in a spiteful mood: he therefore raised the window, which enabled him to hear distinctly the whole verse; it appeared to be but the *refrain* or burden of a sea-song.

" You're a haxing for your seamen,
But your seamen they be far,
Your ships will ne'er be mann'd again,
As they was a-mann'd last war;"

repeating the last line with emphasis; and upsetting the knife-board with a choral crash.

Burton burst into an immoderate fit of laughter, at this sally, obviously meant for himself; or intended as an atonement to the injured reputation and honour of Tom's old companion in arms. For the truth must not be concealed; he always considered their heroism impeached and calumniated, by the enthusiastic encomiums he had heard lavished by Burton on tars of the present day—

" Why so, Tiller?" said the lieutenant aloud.—" Why not manned as well as ever?"

" Why, Sir? bekase you hav'n't got the *men*—there's scarce a tar with a tail now in the sarvis."*

The window was closed immediately, as if the person addressed had heard enough.—The old sailor chuckled to think his artillery had not been thrown away, and muttering to himself,

* In the Revolutionary war, a tar in the service without a tail, would be considered as great an anomaly, as a *Pacha* in Turkey now without a couple.

"Let him put that in his pipe and smoke it," with evident glee resumed his occupation to the same tune—

The employment of the ladies, for the morning, being completed, Mrs. Crank's parcels and tracts ticketed, and addressed to their several destinations; the choice of ball and morning dresses, in which Emily and her mother were to appear, during their stay at Cheltenham being decided on, with the advice and assistance of the sage Martha, who carefully deposited them in the travelling imperial: the family party re-appeared in the drawing-room.

During the days of Burton's convalescence, subsequently to his accident, he had endeavoured to escape from that *ennui*, which might have been easily dissipated by less restricted conversation and intercourse, in perusing, with avidity, the new productions, which were regularly forwarded to the ladies from a neighbouring library, as soon almost as published.—In his occasional criticisms or commendation of the authors, both mother and daughter were compelled to admit his good taste, and often adopt his decision. From being, at first, a critic merely for his own amusement, he soon established himself in the generally unenviable post of reader, during the leisure hours of the ladies; and by degrees, the reserve of Emily so far had yielded to the assiduities of her admirer, that she now often sat down to give wings to time, by the exercise of her musical talents, in return for this condescension. And it may be easily conceived that, on such occasions, she never failed to draw forth, from at least one individual, abundant testimonies of his unfeigned approbation.

Conformably with the scruples of her mother, music was allowed to make no part of the amusements of the Sabbath day: although the veteran who fully participated in the pleasure derived from his favourite's skill and execution, did not give up the point without a struggle; and Emily had offered to compromise with her mother's conscience, by performing only selections from Handel, and other composers of sacred music: whilst Burton, who more especially felt the privation, attempted, on one of these occasions, to repress this instance on the part of the matron of "zeal without knowledge," (a phrase bor-

rowed, by the bye, from that scriptural lady's lips,) by citing the case of the greater liberality of sentiment evinced on this subject, by the most strictly religious man in these dominions,—his Majesty, King George the Third himself; who permitted his own band to perform every Sunday evening on Windsor Terrace; and failed not himself to participate, on almost all these occasions, in the innocent gratifications of his happy subjects.*

Nothing is so contagious as habit; and perhaps the most orthodox man in Christendom, if he lived long enough amongst professors of the Turkish persuasion, might feel it difficult to refrain from embracing Mahomedanism. In conformity with this propensity in human nature to become a convert to doctrines reiteratedly, and constantly inculcated, Burton, for the last two Sundays, in order to preserve in some measure appearances, had "followed the motions of the female flag," for such was the nautical phrase used in explaining the motives of his conduct to the veteran; and selected a volume of that celebrated theologian and philosopher, Mr. Paley, for his perusal. This change in the subject of his studies, it may, however, be as well here to confess, was in part compulsory. For, in her zeal for the edification of her family, and the profitable occupation of this day, it was her uniform practice to secure, under lock and key, all books but those of a religious character: justifying the privation by a remark, that however valuable the advantages of worldly wisdom, the acquirement of *that* of a still higher order, should, at least once in the week, be the pursuit of all persons anxious to "redeem the time, because the days are evil." Nor was it extraordinary, that he should make this, or yet greater sacrifice, to pro-

* We suspect Mr. Burton, in this instance, plumed himself on a repartee which, in strictness, belongs to a member of another profession.—It was the practice in 1810, to permit a military band to play each Sunday evening on the Downs at Clifton, for the gratification of the good people of Bristol.—A gentleman of that profession, which entitles him to interfere in ecclesiastical discipline, remonstrated with the commanding officer on the station, and denounced the practice as irreligious and unseemly.—The precedent of His Majesty was quoted by the gallant officer, (we believe Major General Warde,) accompanied by the remark—"that none of His Majesty's subjects could be very far wrong, whilst following so virtuous and pious an example."

itiate so powerful an adversary, as he felt Mrs. Crank might prove, were she able to add to the list of his other qualifications as a husband for her daughter—a disregard for religion. Whether this mode of attempting to nod favour in her eye, originated in himself, or the kind suggestion of another, the reader, who is aware of what Burton was not, will perceive it was adopted too late.

In compliance with the wishes of Mrs. Crank, Burton was exercising his lungs in reading aloud, from the page of her hebdomadal favourite, Paley, and had just concluded that dispiriting reflection on ill-assorted marriages—

“Love is neither general, nor durable; and where that is wanting, no lessons of duty, no delicacy of sentiment, will go half so far with the generality of mankind, and womankind, as this one intelligible reflection, that they must each make the best of their bargain—”

When Tiller opened the door, and handed a letter to his master, who, as usual, was occupied with his telescope examining the build, trim, character, and nature of every vessel that hove in sight.

“Who the devil can this be from?” said Crank, breaking the seal, and, at the same time, interrupting, rather unceremoniously, this startling descant on connubial fecundity. Then beginning his perusal of the letter, at the first word, which men of business generally do, as if to anticipate its contents, by ascertaining who is the writer, he exclaimed—

“Staunch—Staunch! Stephen Staunch—how’s this?”

“Why, hang it,” said Burton, forgetting his part, and chucking Paley and his philosophy from him—“that’s my captain, Sir.”

“Then I suppose it’s all about you,” said Crank, who began reading the letter to himself, which he accompanied by an occasional exclamation—

“Aye aye—just as I thought—very handsome—come, Burton, you’ll have to put her head the other way.”

At this expression, the searching eye of the devout lame sought in her daughter’s face an explanation of this singular allusion: unconscious of the mother’s glance, Emily’s eye was fixed on her uncle, and betrayed neither

emotion, or change of feature, other than that of indefinite curiosity.

"Right enough!—follower for ever," said Crank, with emphasis, still reading.

"Follow *who*? I don't understand you," interrupted Mrs. Crank.

Crank, who at any time had an objection to this sort of interrogatory, did not deign to reply, but muttered on—

"Better than a stranger—hate new faces—sorry you should lose your commission, young man."

"Lose my commission, Sir? What for?" exclaimed the lieutenant, with warmth, and committing an involuntary act of unpoliteness, by '*craneing*,' as it is termed in hunting, over the old man's shoulder, in order to satisfy his curiosity.

"But here, my dear fellow, take and read for yourself," said Crank, raising his head, which came violently in contact with Burton's left eye: punishing the one, for the breach of the rules of good breeding, and reminding the other of his imaginary ailments.

"There now!" said the captain, "I shall have that cursed dizziness in the head worse than ever."

After apologizing for his awkwardness, Burton left him leisure to ruminate on his symptoms; and he was observed hypochondriacally consulting his pulse, whilst Burton read to himself as follows:—

"IHamozze, November 3d.

"DEAR SIR,

"No doubt you will be surprised by the receipt of this; but having written to our young friend, my second lieutenant, at his agent's, and at his friends in Glo'stershire, both of which letters remain unanswered; it suggested itself to me, that, probably in his rambles on shore, he might have paid his respects to a family, for which he entertains so much esteem; and from which he has received so many marks of polite and kind attention.

"The newspapers will, ere this, have apprised you of the loss of our Brig—I am happy to inform you of my

appointment, together with my officers and crew, to another, which the Admiralty have thought proper to name the *Spitfire*. She has been some time commissioned, and is almost ready for sea.

"Unless Burton makes his appearance, he is sure to be superseded, which, independent of the very sincere regard I have for him, would be highly prejudicial to his professional interest; more especially as we are appointed to a very fine vessel, and promised by the port admiral a most advantageous cruising ground. So that, I can assure you, I expect to put something handsome in pocket this trip.

"As an old follower of mine, I should be very sorry he should be excluded from these fortunate prospects; and you cannot do me a greater favour than by communicating this agreeable intelligence to him, should he cross your hawse—I trust, it is unnecessary to impress more fully on his mind, the necessity of his making the utmost dispatch, to prevent accidents.—In fact, in the *weekly account*, I have already made a false return, in order to keep a vacancy for one, of whose value I am perfectly sensible.

"With best regards to the ladies,
 "Believe me, dear Sir,
 "Your's truly,
 "STEPHEN STAUNCH.

"To Captain Crank, R. N.
 "&c. &c. &c."

The perusal of this letter, at any other time, would have produced very different effects from those which he experienced in this instance—He might have felt angry with himself, at the risk he had so heedlessly run, or felt delighted, at the prospect of renewed activity; but such, it must be confessed, were not his present feelings.—The late explanation he had had with Emily, which encouraged him to imagine his most sanguine expectations, might, ere long, be realized; and the prospect of improving his chances of success, by the opportunities which would be

afforded him in the journey down to his own country, were motives almost sufficiently powerful to make him fling His Majesty's commission to the winds ;—and there can be no doubt, had the letter, by being addressed to himself, and he thus at liberty to act without control, its contents would have remained a secret to the family, and any young fellow in the service, less in love, might have supplied his place as second lieutenant of the *Spitfire*.

Pending the reading of the letter by our young friend, it is not to be supposed the mind of the matron was idle, or altogether absorbed in the speculative doctrines of the celebrated moral philosopher.—How to defeat the arrangements for a journey, which she had herself planned, was the object uppermost in her thoughts : And, notwithstanding all their preparations had now been completed, and they were on the very eve of departure, a spirit like Mrs. Crank's only felt whetted, as it were, by these difficulties, to attempt that, which most others would have considered it prudent to deem impracticable.—With a countenance denoting attention to the author's reasoning, and even a docility of mind, occasionally manifested by an inclination of the head, in token of acquiescence, or accompanied by way of impressiveness, with an elevation of her handsome taper fingers, as they hung over the arm of the sofa ; somewhat after the modest manner of a beardless senator, addressing, for the first time, parliament, in a maiden speech ; she appeared to mark the more important passages ; whilst, in fact, she was proposing to herself, in rapid succession, a variety of plans for postponing the expedition,—changing the *route*,—or, what was most important of all, changing their highly objectionable *compagnon du voyage*.

However perplexed with the difficulties of her situation, she was consoled by the reflection, that should things come to the worst, she had it in her power, at least, to affect sudden illness, during the night ; alarm the family, and call in her faithful coadjutor, the doctor : upon whose services and fidelity, she imagined, having gone too far to retract, she might reckon with confidence.

The longest heads are often too short-reached to compete with the flight of time, or the unforeseen course of

events. For whilst she pondered on the means of prevention, the evil she most dreaded was thus remedied, as it were, by a miracle : whilst Crank, as if to render assurance doubly sure, thus addressed his young friend :—

“ Well, my boy, never mind !—its all for the best.—I regret losing your company——”

“ What an idiot !” softly murmured Mrs. Crank.

“ But a man mus’n’t sacrifice his commission.—Your captain seems anxious for your welfare, and I wish you luck,” said the veteran; clutching the lieutenant by the hand with a force which equally displayed the old man’s vigorous health, and the cordiality of his kindness.

Here was no room for evasion.—The blow struck was decisive ;—and Burton, whose face reminded the fair Emily this moment of the doleful dumps of poor Widdrington, as described in the ballad of Chevy Chase, heard the commodore pronounce his opinion on the necessity of his departure with nearly the same feelings as a culprit at the Old Bailey greets the sentence of the judge who banishes him from his native land for life.

CHAPTER XIII.

ADIEUS.

And there were sudden partings, such as press
The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs
Which ne’er might be repeated.

Childe Harold.

Most persons who have arrived at years of discretion, have been indiscreet enough to be, at least, once in love. —To such readers it will be unnecessary to describe the state of mind in which Burton passed this evening. But for the benefit of the younger classes of society, it will

be as well to observe, that he was totally indifferent whether the world then fell to pieces, so that in the general ruin he might have escaped the keen consciousness of that exquisite misery which overwhelmed him. Chagrined and mortified, he felt as if the cup of bliss had slipped from his hands at the moment when the brim pressed his lip.—He was about to resign all his towering expectations; and, singular to say, he was compelled to forego, at least for a time, those expectations in conformity to the wish, or rather by the command of that friend on whom alone he could rely for their fulfilment. Yet, it appeared, there was no alternative; for he was convinced the surest way to lose the girl was to sacrifice his professional character; and he well knew that Crank was made of that stern stuff which would not fail to look upon a wilful neglect of duty as justly meriting the highest censure of his superiors, and deservedly entailing on him the loss of his rank in the service.

Extreme as his vexation undoubtedly was, he, ere the conclusion of the evening, became sufficiently collected to cast about, and devise means for once more procuring an interview with Emily alone. This, as before observed, was at any time a matter of considerable difficulty, and the more he thought upon it, the less was he induced to hope it would be practicable. At times he felt almost disposed to throw himself on the old man's generosity, and, depending on the kindness which he had already experienced from him, fully disclose the perplexity and anguish of mind under which he laboured, as a pretext for soliciting his advice. Yet here again it suggested itself to him, that such were Crank's notions of discipline, and devoted attachment to the service of his country, that he would doubtless counsel him to join, pursuant to orders, had he been not only the husband of Emily, but had it been his very wedding-day. Failing to derive consolation from this source, he bethought himself of all the stratagems he had ever heard or read of under similar circumstances.—The most feasible and most likely to effect his object appeared to be pressing Martha into the service; and much as he would, under any other circumstances, have condemned the practice of tampering with a servant's

lidity, he found himself compelled, as a *dernier resort*, to adopt a practice so highly objectionable and disingenuous. To afford him even a chance of success in accomplishing his object by this clandestine mode of proceeding, he determined to act with the utmost caution. Feigning, therefore, that his preparations for departure were incomplete, he repaired to his own room, determining to solicit by letter an interview with Emily, if only for a few seconds.

And now, as he sat alone, pen in hand, and that pen already dipped in ink, every objection which he had before felt seemed to acquire new force. Nor was this unnatural; he was no longer under the fascination of that woman's eye, for whom he would have dared everything; and as his feelings became calm, his integrity and rectitude of principle reasserted their influence over his mind. After some time spent in this mental struggle, he flung his pen aside, and thus gave utterance to his feelings:

"Wretched man that I am! how every thing appears to have altered its aspect!—That which once would have been the first wish of my heart, now proves a source of disappointment and vexation.—How happy ought I to be again to resume a life of activity in my profession—Where are my ambitious aspirations?—What has become of my firmness of mind?—How absolute and uncontrollable is the influence of this passion!—an influence the more extraordinary as the chances of success seem now to be rendered yet more doubtful.—This ill-timed appointment—this detestable; dangerous trip, to a place full of gaiety and dissipation—would that I had been dumb, rather than have recommended it!—A young girl too, of her personal beauty and accomplishments—and, worst of all, with her prospects and expectations!—How the honied flatterers will surround her!—What new prospects may arise!—What dreams of ambition!—How certain my misery!—How soon shall I be forgotten!"

He had now risen from his chair, and wildly paced the room—at intervals exclaiming—"Yet her disposition is noble—her heart generous and susceptible,—too true it is, I feel her all angelic.—Why then should I despair?—

If I could obtain an assurance from her lips—that none other——”

And here he stopped, and appeared almost choking with something he could not utter. Again regaining something like self-possession, he argued as men do, who are determined to be convinced.

“Had I but that pledge!—the slightest pledge—I could trust to fortune.—Has she not acknowledged a preference?—Is he not my friend?—And has he not assured me, that the inequalities of our fortunes alone impose an obstacle to my wishes?—Nay, more, pointed out the mode of securing the acquiescence of all.”

Here his eye kindled with animation, and his expressive features were lighted up by hope.

“Yet,” continued he, checking himself, “all these hopes are visionary, unless I see her again alone.—Little did I think yesterday our parting was so near,—had she, too, been aware, she perhaps would have been less reserved—and if entreaties, prayers, or my tears could move her, my heart would not now be distracted with uncertainty.—Oh!—I feel that my life is bound up with her’s.—Her fate may never be mine—but without her, misery must be my lot.”

His agitation now became intense, and he arrested his rapid march to and fro in the centre of the apartment; where he stood encircling, and violently compressing with both hands his throbbing temples, in an attitude of mingled resolve and despair.

A few moments afterwards, as if recollecting the urgency of his situation, and the value of the few minutes that were left for action, he hastily resumed—

“What do I here?—Why do I hesitate?—There is but one course open.—Call it a breach of hospitality!—of confidence!—it must be done.—The sacrifice must be made,—I must risk consistency, character, or—lose her—Never! never!” said he, with a shudder,—“perish that damning thought—I am resolved.”

And resolved it appears he was.—He seized his pen.—Every suggestion of prudence was vain amid the storm of fearful passion, which raging within his bosom now

mounted to his brain.—One line sufficed to inform her of his wish—another, to announce his determination.

“I am distracted.—Let me, angel of my destiny! see you *alone* for a moment. Fail not, or this night is the last of Burton’s life.”

The dreadful summons of a man resolved on self-destruction was sealed, and in a few seconds after, forced with many entreaties, grateful professions, and his last guinea, on the reluctant Martha.

In half an hour he received this short reply :

“Terror conquers prudence.—When all have retired, expect me in the drawing-room, but not alone.”

He thrust the note into his pocket, and rejoined the family.—The old gentleman was already preparing to betake himself to rest. A cordial interchange of kind wishes on his part, and grateful acknowledgments on that of Burton took place; and after taking a suitable leave of Mrs. Crank and her daughter, he retired with the rest.

The clock struck eleven—when a gentle tap at his room-door summoned him to the meeting.—He recognized the maid servant in silence, and quietly followed the direction of the light which faintly beamed from the appointed place of rendezvous.

The door was closed by Martha as he entered the drawing-room, where he perceived Emily by the fireplace, apparently deep in thought, and still as the stone on which she leaned for support.—She was scarcely conscious of his approach, ere he was at her feet, and overwhelmed her with grateful acknowledgments for the kind confidence thus reposed in him.

“Attribute it not to confidence, Mr. Burton, but to the alarm your message excited—you completely terrified me into compliance.”

“Pardon the anxiety, Emily,—the urgency with which I sought this interview.—In *my* circumstances, distracted as I am between doubts and fears, life would have been valueless, had I not once more seen you alone!”

“Imagine not we are alone, or unobserved,” said she

quickly, "nor dare I remain longer—Farewell! You have my best wishes!"

"A thousand thanks," said he—"excellent, amiable girl.—But stay.—Leave me not in this state of distraction.—Encourage me to hope—"

"You may rest assured," said she, interrupting the unfinished entreaty, "that I am not insensible to your merits—much less can I be ungrateful—To you I owe my life."

"Talk not of gratitude," exclaimed he; "you owe me nothing—'twas instinct—self-preservation. Think you I should have survived you?"

"I doubt not your feeling—your heroic generosity."

"Then force me not," said he, "to wish that moment of peril had been my last. Gladly then would I have resigned life for your preservation—or even to endear my memory to your recollection—and now I swear that existence will be intolerable, unless shared with you."

"Why," said she, with rising agitation, "will you alarm me thus? Rest content, my friend, with an assurance that I shall ever feel a lively interest in all that concerns you. It would, indeed, be difficult to *forget*—"

"My soul's angel!" he exclaimed, with rapturous admiration—"Your noble spirit—your divine perfections are my best security—yet grant me, Emily, the assurance, that at my return——"

"Cease, pray cease!—Recollect I am not mistress of my own destiny.—Adopted by my generous uncle, but for his bounty and commiseration, I should have been now an indigent, neglected orphan, unworthy of your preference. His wishes I must consult, in order to secure my *own* respect.—I owe him more than a daughter's duty."

"I am not then interdicted—" said the lieutenant, more cheerfully; and he would have proceeded.

"Press me not further.—Here," said she, extending an arm, whose inimitable tincts would, if contrasted, have shamed Titian's choicest colouring—"is my hand, in friendship: a friendship sincere, as I feel it will be *lasting*."

He snatched the love-pledge—he pressed it to his lips



—he pressed it to his heart.—Pity, if not love, lighted up her divine features, and she cast on him a look, such as warmed the pure seraph's breast at sight of our first parents in the guileless innocence of Eden.—How nearly were his fondest anticipations realized! He was overpowered by a feeling of intense delight—and caught her, suffused with blushes, to his arms. Alarmed by his manner, she struggled to disengage herself; each effort, like those of the limed bird, but the more entangled her. He pressed the struggling girl to his bosom, and almost suffocated her with burning kisses.—She would have shrieked, but her voice failed ere she recollected assistance was at hand—

Her sigh was balm, her tears were dew,
And only rais'd his flame anew.

Her eyes swim—the purple light of health deserts her cheek—she is pale as the Parian marble—she sinks in his strained embrace.

Recalled to himself by finding her whom he adored lifeless in his arms, his alarm became as excessive as his passion had been uncontrollable.—A groan of horror escaped him at witnessing the effect of his rash violence. He placed his hand on that bosom only to find it throbb'd not—the pulse of life stood still.—His agony was immeasurable.—Sinking on one knee to support her on the other, and give her a fairer chance to revive, the fiery tears fell fast on her pale neck. He durst not move, nor desert his sad burden to seek assistance.—To reveal her situation was interdicted by love and honour.—Were she to perish, he had inhaled the last breath which passed her lips.—He might, perchance, be branded as her murderer, by her relations—by the world.—“What have I done!” he exclaimed, in the bitterest anguish. “What cursed fate presided at my birth! Wretch!—Monster that I am!”

At this moment the door opened; and the faithful Martha, who had been stationed within call by her young mistress, burst in, sobbing with grief, and mingled her angry reproaches with his own.

“Begone—cruel—cruel—hard-hearted man! leave us

—yet stay a moment—raise her with me to this couch—support her head—there! Great God, does she still live?"

As he deposited her on the couch, he felt as though he was placing her on her bier.—She sighed faintly, and he exclaimed, in a frenzy of joy—"She lives!"

"Then fly," said the fond-hearted menial, "fly this moment, or we are betrayed.—I entreat you, Sir, leave us: for you have alarmed some one, and I hear footsteps approaching."

She concealed the light behind the great chair, and violently forced him to the door. He respected her fidelity, and made no resistance. He fled, and reached in silence his own room. In a moment his candle was extinguished, and he listened, in breathless suspense, at his door for some minutes.—A quick footstep crossed the hall.—He heard Emily's name pronounced, with evident agitation, by her mother; indistinct sounds, as of queries and answers, ensued.—The servant girl passed hastily by, and, in returning with water, whispered to him, as he opened the door,—

"Be still, for mercy's sake, Sir—she's much better," and regained the drawing-room in haste.

The door was closed—he ventured on tip-toe near enough to it to hear indistinctly the faint accents of Emily in reply to her mother's anxious solicitude; and he was soon after compelled by their approach to betake himself to his room with precipitation; where, for hours, the distracting tumult of his sensations prevented all repose.

CHAPTER XIV.

TRAVELLING A LA MODE.

——— creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school.

As You Like It.

It is not to be supposed that having retired in so agitated a state of mind to his room, the lieutenant was very successful in cultivating sleep.—Ere daylight he was dressed and prepared for his lonely journey.—How different from the anticipations of the preceding day!—After the thrilling interview just described, he had little relish for a cold, ceremonious parting; and determined on a precipitate retreat ere the family had risen.—By the assistance of old Tiller, who was the only person stirring in the house, his “traps,” as Tom called them, were removed to the little inn, from which the only cross conveyance to the place of his destination daily started. His funds, it must be confessed, when he left Plymouth, were comparatively slender; and they were considerably diminished by the charges of travelling post, and the expenses incidental to his accident. Any inconvenience resulting from this might have been obviated, had not his modesty, or rather let it be admitted, his pride, prevented him from confessing the real state of his finances when Crank, the night before, tendered him, if requisite, the use of his purse in order to join his ship. He felt as most young men of spirit would have felt under such circumstances; more especially as Crank was a man too much above board, as he termed it, to think it necessary that an offer to lend his own money should be made in the absence of his sister-in-law: the lieutenant therefore declined the veteran’s kindness, assuring him he had sufficient to clear all expenses incident to his return.

After dismissing Tiller with a *douceur*, which he could spare, he counted out his money, and perceived he had but a few shillings left. Economy, he felt, must be the

order of the day.—On enquiry he ascertained that a caravan, or one horse covered tilt cart, would shortly set out for Plymouth; and though the conveyance was not remarkable for its speed, it was convenient under the circumstances, and suited the state of his finances.

Having been detained nearly an hour beyond the appointed time, waiting for a pilot, who was expected to return after bringing round a vessel to Torbay, where it seemed, however, he himself had anchored, as he failed to join company; the caravan set out, carrying as outside passengers the driver and a pot companion, still under the effects of last night's inebriation; a butcher, whom they were to drop at Totness; the lieutenant, and a handsome young woman with her infant, about to rejoin her husband at Plymouth.

And here was our friend Burton, who had arrived, alone and lord-like, with post-horses in 'fume and furious haste,' returning sluggishly and unwillingly to duty at a jog-trot pace, hardly faster than a walk; and surrounded by persons of so low a rank in life, that he was glad to preserve a strict *incognito*, and a stricter silence. Indeed his mind had abundant food to ruminate upon; and so involved was he in reflecting on the peculiarity of his situation, that the driver flagellated his beast unnoticed, till Humanity Martin would have shed tears; the butcher openly made furious love to the young wife; the baby cried and screamed itself, at times, into fits; and the drunken man in front swore as many oaths as, had a magistrate been present to enforce the legal penalties, would have rendered him a beggar for life; yet the thoughtful, pensive son of Neptune was so silent, so abstracted in manner, and fixed his eyes so intently on the features of the scenery through which they passed, that he either heard not, or appeared not to hear a syllable of all that passed.—At Totness they stopped, and changed the horse. Much to the satisfaction of the young woman, who was a fine specimen of an English peasant, the butcher's wife almost immediately appeared and took him captive; thus relieving her from his persecution. The remaining parties having partaken of such refreshments as the inn, or their pockets, afforded, and the drunken man

being now far advanced in a state of happy obliviousness, the caravan again set out at a brisker pace.—The evening set in to rain; the drunken man being twice picked up off the horse's crupper by the driver, was bundled in from the front bar to an inside place; and soon fell asleep, very unceremoniously, on the young woman's shoulder; who, from this circumstance, first became an object of interest to the lieutenant. He soon disengaged her from the weight of her drowsy suitor; and she required no second invitation to place herself on Burton's side of the tilt, leaving the slumberer to snore at full length.—Women of all ranks, particularly of an humbler, are peculiarly sensible of well-timed attention; and this act of civility almost immediately put them on a footing of familiarity. From the simple inquiries of his female fellow traveller about the *Volage*; and the Adriatic; and when a ship would be paid on her return to harbour? and what leave a sailor might obtain to come on shore? he could hardly fail to learn that she was one of that class of women in humble life, whose happiness is more transient, and whose patience and virtue is more severely put to the test than those of any other females breathing;—she was a sailor's wife.

She had been married but a week, ere her husband had been compelled to leave her in the village where both first saw the light; he was now returned after a two years' absence in the Mediterranean; and we leave it to the sympathy of our female readers to conjecture, how full her heart must have been of the fondest and happiest anticipations on the subject of their meeting.

Before night fall they again changed the horse, and the lieutenant failed not to press the fair traveller to share the few comforts his almost exhausted purse afforded. It was nearly two hours after dark ere they arrived at Plymouth-Dock. He inquired into the character of the house in which she proposed to set up, and recommended her to the protection of the landlady, promising to take care that her arrival should be communicated to her husband immediately, and departed for the *Prince William Henry*, followed by a lad who carried his valise.

As he had anticipated, here he found his senior lieu-

tenant sitting alone in the coffee-room, who no sooner eyed him, than he jumped up (waving every thing like ceremony) to receive him with a cordiality, perfectly in unison with his general character.

"Bless me, Burton! where the deuce have you been?—We had given you up for lost!—Did the captain's letter reach you?"

Without waiting for a reply, he continued—"Luckily you have arrived, my boy, or you would have been superseded next week."

"I wish," said Burton, drawing out his words with indifference,—"I wish I had."

"The devil you do!—Why so?" said Hasty.

"It would have been a thousand times better for me!"

"Why," returned the first lieutenant; "you seem more down in the mouth than ever—what, hav'n't you shaken off the Dartmouth craft yet?"

"Hasty, avast with that profanation!—remember you are not talking now of an ordinary woman, but of a being, far beyond her sex in beauty, accomplishments, and virtue!"

"Oh, hang your accomplishments, and your virtues! you'll put me into a fit of the blue devils."

He then rang the bell with violence, and when the waiter appeared he inquired—

"What's the play?—I say, Burton, you must go, and shake off this fit amongst the girls—there you'll see," said he, with a laugh, "both beauty and accomplishments."

"I'm not in a humour," said Burton, "for amusement or mirth—I'm not well—I require rest."

"See here," exclaimed Hasty, raising his arm with mock energy—"Damme if you don't come to-night to the play, I'll send you on dock-yard duty at day-light to-morrow.—Come, waiter—coffee for two, and take Mr. Burton's traps up to my bed-room. I suppose you've a bed for him—but no matter—don't wait for us after twelve."

"No, Sir," said the waiter, making an obsequious bow, who felt as if he was about to pay a compliment in what

was to follow — “No, Sir, we never *do* sit up for the navy gemmen.—Misses says as how, it’s never no use.”

‘Many a time and oft,’ Burton would have relished the humour of this left-handed compliment: but he was now that anomalous creature, a lover; and saw every thing through an altered medium.—Hasty saw no humour in it, so remarked to his friend—

“That cockney chap is a devilish civil fellow, and seems to know how to behave himself.”

The waiter soon returned with coffee, announcing—

“The play to-night, Sir, is Theller, or the Moor of Wenus—It is bespoke, Sir,—and no doubt there’ll be a crowded couse, has hall the midshipmites in the harbour ashore.—Our stage manager too’s, a wery great hec-tor, and plays the Black to the life.”

“Thank you, William, thank you,” said Hasty, and turning round to Burton, half whispered—“Now that’s what I call a curst clever fellow. He seems to be up to every thing—I wonder was he ever at sea?”

Burton was too much in the *blues* to hear anything of the black,—the manager,—or the Moor. One note, however, had been struck which vibrated on his ear, and soothed his sorrow—it was the illiterate allusion of the waiter to that type of all female loveliness,—and he might have adopted Hamlet’s confession to his friend, and said, I have her “in my mind’s eye.”

In this frame of mind he sat musing and sipping his coffee; and would have sipped and mused on till midnight, had not Hasty, who was determined to carry his point, roused him from his reverie, by desiring him to “toss-off his scald, and make haste. And now I recollect,” added he, “you never asked for the skipper, or any of your old shipmates. It looks as if you’d lost all your manners—but no wonder, you’ve been so long ashore.”

If any thing could have made Burton laugh, it would have been a remark so singular; but he was ‘not in the vein’ to relish, or retort, a joke. Thus reminded of his negligence, he endeavoured to make an *amende*, by a general inquiry after their health, whilst, as to the ship herself, he sincerely wished her at the bottom of the sea, or that she still constituted part of the effective force of the

enemy ; remarking—and it was the only apothegm which had escaped his lips for the last twenty-four hours—“ That it is always the case, when a man would give his eyes for a ship, he can’t get one—but if he has his hands full of business ashore, he is sure to be compelled to leave it at sixes and sevens, in consequence of some cursed appointment.”

“ Why, what’s the matter now ?—one would think you had lost a chance of being made a bishop, you’re so profoundly discontented—I thought once, you were fond of your profession ;” added Hasty, in a taunting tone, which did not fail to rouse the slumbering spirit of his friend.

“ And so I am ; but, my dear Hasty,” answered Burton, with a sigh—“ my heart’s broken.”

“ D—— it, don’t be down-hearted about trifles,” said his brother officer, who now began sincerely to pity his extreme dejection—“ What’s one woman more than another—if you must marry—wed your ship, and seek fortune in your profession !—come, that was my old dad’s maxim ; and he died within three of his flag.” So saying, he good-naturedly seized his junior by the shoulder, and pulled him perforce out of the room.

CHAPTER XV.

FEELING A FARCE.

—— A tragedy, wherein we sit as
Spectators awhile, and then act our part in it. SWIFT.
We are all made fools by our feelings.
Spanish Proverb.

STROLLING across Fore-street, our adventurers soon arrived at the Dock Theatre.—Nor can it be concealed, that, in this search after amusement, their anticipations were widely dissimilar.

From what has been already mentioned, it will be observed, that the senior of the two, although on him, by virtue of his office, had devolved all the bustle and labour of preparing and equipping their new vessel for sea, imagined he had good reason to congratulate himself on being so speedily appointed to a ship: whilst his companion, who felt this, instead of a subject of congratulation, positively a stumbling block in the path of his fortune, was so chagrined, that he was little disposed to accept of amusement, however seductive the shape in which it might present itself. Still, however, from experience, Hasty was induced to believe, there was something so exhilarating, in the very aspect of a theatre, that he had no doubt on his mind, could he but once involve his friend amidst the lively turmoil and tumult within, he would soon forget all his cares and anxieties without.

Bustling through the crowd of noisy boys, and showily dressed women, which surrounded the doors, they paid their money; and as Burton happened to be in plain cloths, he was soon accommodated with a seat—a circumstance, by the bye, which ensures respect in king's ports, from even the 'Dock-yard-Maties'—a class of men, whose hostility, and turbulent insolence to naval officers—themselves, as it were, a part or appendage to the navy,—is proverbial.—Hasty appeared to have a

roving commission, and went from box to box, and place to place, chatting with his acquaintances. The house was already full, in consequence of its having been announced, that the play had been selected in compliance with the wishes, and would be performed, "under the patronage of the captain and officers of His Majesty's ship, *Flora*." Although the curtain had not risen, it would be absurd to say, that the performance had not already commenced. That description of entertainment, which has become so prevalent on the boards of minor London theatres, in our day yclept, a Monopolylogue, was performing with an astounding effect, accompanied by a crash of wind instruments in full practice—but, to be intelligible, it will be necessary to drop the metaphorical style.

It has fallen to the lot of few persons, not in the naval service, to be present at a dramatic representation, either here or at Portsmouth. Those who have witnessed it, will scarcely forget its possessing this striking distinction, from other representations of the kind; that it appears, most of the persons frequenting the theatre, have assembled, rather with a view to amuse themselves by their own performances, than by any exhibition of the talents of the hapless votaries of the sock and buskin; or, in other words, that the performers here are before the curtain, and, instead of receiving salaries, pay for the permission to perform to the few who are privileged to walk the stage; but who might almost as well be mutes on the occasion.

Notwithstanding the noise and bustle which prevailed amongst the midshipmen in the slips, the warrant, and petty officers in the pit, and the sailors and "jollys" aloft, an evident anxiety was manifested, that the piece should proceed—or, speaking with greater adherence to truth, that *something* should be going on, to keep, as they termed it, "the company alive." The *Flora's* ship's-company, which had been landed from the frigate at 'Mutton-Cove,' and marched in double file to the theatre, punctually at the hour appointed, where it was met by seamen of other ships, and many female friends, could little brook the delay which took place this evening, in consequence of the re-

luctance of the manager to commence the performance, prior to the arrival of his patron, Sir Harry Driver.

"'Pon deck, there!" cried a voice in the gallery—"why don't you man the fore-clue-garnets and haul the fore-sail up?"

This was accompanied by a shout of acclamation, which clearly showed the proposal was in unison with the general feeling.—As the audience now became clamorous, the manager was observed peering through a slit in the curtain, reconnoitring the look of the house, and anxious to prevent tumult.

"I say, shipmate," continued the same boisterous railer, catching, to use a parliamentary phrase, the manager's eye—"I say, if you don't want your top-light dowsed, you'll start out o' that, and clue-up in time—here's a thundering squall brewing astarn, as 'ill split that 'ere rent in your canvass from clew to earing."

This prediction, no doubt, would have been verified, but for the entrance of Sir Harry, accompanied by two of his lieutenants, whose appearance gave a different direction to their volubility.

"Here's the skipper—hurrah!—stand by for three cheers."

"Aye, aye," echoed several voices in the gallery.

"Hurrah—together, my hearties," resumed the spokesman.

"Wait for the time," cried the chief-boatswain's mate in the pit, now rising from his seat and hailing the gallery.—

"Up! up! on your pins, every mother's soul o' you—Are you all ready?"

"Go it, Ned,"* cried half a dozen voices aloft; "go it like a good-un."

The boatswain's mate quickly obeyed the summons, putting the 'call' to his mouth, and waving his left hand as the well-known signal was thrice repeated, accompanied each time by a shout from his shipmates, which shook the theatre to its foundation.

* A phrase since become deservedly popular, from its historical connection with a late splendid naval achievement.

The curtain now rising, that most justly admired of all Shakspeare's tragedies, "The Moor of Venice," commenced: in the course of which, it may be easily foreseen, passages occurred, that could not fail strongly to interest the feelings of many amongst an audience, composed, for the most part, of young persons who rarely enjoyed an amusement so pregnant with excitement.

In that part, where Othello's approach to the isle is discerned by some on the watch, who cry out, "A sail, a sail!" the hitherto peaceable demeanour and attention displayed by the tars, since the curtain rose, suffered some interruption from exclamations like these: "Point to her—Which way is she standing?—Turn the hands up, make sail,"—a cheer.

The play again proceeded uninterruptedly until the Moor arrived at the passage—

"And this, and this, the greatest discords be,

(*Kissing the fair Desdemona*)

"Thate'er our hearts shall make!"

"I'll bet a week's grog," said a clamorous topman, "the young un 'ill be a creole."

"Aye, sink 'em," said another, "there's the luck of your black fellows—Why, 'twas only 'tother day, I twigs the captain's steward in tow with one o' the freshest-rosy-cheek'd craft you'd see, from North-corner to Castle-Rag."

Hasty, who had ere this descended from the slips, and joined his friend, now jogged Burton's elbow, and remarked, in a whisper—

"Come! don't be down-hearted—if an old black man can weather on a young girl, why should you despair—for tho' you're no turban'd Turk, like Othello, you were always the devil among the women."

"It's more than doubtful to me, Othello ever was a Turk; though now-a-days he wears a turban," said Burton, who, as he rarely declined defending his sentiments, would perhaps, in another turn of mind, have discussed this historical query more elaborately.

Iago, in the drinking scene, had no sooner exclaimed

—"Some wine, ho!" than there was a dissenting shout from both pit and gallery—"No! no!—Grog, O!"

"To be sure, Grog, O!" echoed several voices, whose opinions on this subject, it is needless to observe, were in unison with the speaker's.

"That's you, bo," shouted a messmate from the back part of the gallery—"You're sick o' the black strap* too. D—— it, it always gives me the mullygrubs."

When the same personage in the drama had sung the song concluding—

"A soldier's a man,
A life's but a span;
Why, then, let a soldier drink—"

Cassio exclaiming—"Fore heaven, an excellent song," the boatswain's-mate in the pit, standing up, as before, bellowed aloud—

"Now, my boys, reg'lar coal-box."

The harmonious spirits above caught, as if by inspiration, Cassio's sentiment, and uniting their voices with a precision surprising, under the circumstances, struck into the well known chorus—

"Very good song,
Very well sung,
Jolly companions every one—"

which was thrice repeated, to the total interruption of the play, and utter astonishment of that body in the house, denominated, in the phrase of St. Stephens, 'the landed gentry!'

Burton, too, who was before impenetrable to all the mirth and waggery of these eccentric beings, now seemed tickled by their extravagance, and was observed to laugh—a circumstance from which Hasty augured the most favourable results.

* Very indifferent Port-wine, if at all deserving the name, which was then served out at supper to the crews of his Majesty's ships, on the home station. In the Mediterranean, the lighter wines of the countries adjacent were substituted, which were nearly as bad. Under all circumstances, the practice of serving out wine, in lieu of liquor, was held in cordial abhorrence by our sailors.

To the frequenters of the great theatres in the metropolis, who have witnessed the performance of this admirable tragedy, with eyes suffused with tears, and hearts throbbing with pleasing anguish, beneath the witchery of those great masters of the passions, Kean, Young, and Kemble, it will seem a matter of astonishment, that any passage in this deep-dyed web of pathos and feeling, should afford to the mind a subject of amusement, much less of rude merriment and banter. But so it was; the buoyancy of spirit, and thoughtlessness of this innocent and unsophisticated auditory, sent their fancy wandering from one idea which allured their attention, (for the sentiments were often beyond their comprehension,) to the next which was to them intelligible. The sense of the poet, thus taken in detached parts, was lost, and of course presented but imperfect, broken, and sometimes droll conceptions to the untutored mind. Hence it was, in that dark and treacherous scene, where Iago practises on the foible of a friend to secure his ruin, and rob one or other of his intended victims of life, the sailors seemed only delighted to find that gentlemen could become as ridiculous and helpless under the effects of liquor as themselves.

Cassio's silly speech, therefore, proved an exquisite relish to the audience, where he apostrophises Heaven—"Forgive us our sins," and endeavours to persuade his companion that he is sober. "Do not think, gentlemen, I am drunk; this is my Ancient: this is my right hand, and this is my left hand:—I am not drunk now."—

"No, not *you*," roared a *Jack*, who no doubt would have been a willing witness in Cassio's defence, had he been brought to the gangway for inebriety.

"I can stand well enough," continued the representative of Cassio.

"Then—d—— it! why don't you walk the plank at once, and prove yourself sober," vociferated a long-tailed wag, determined not to slip this opportunity of having a shot on the sly at his first lieutenant, who had only a night or two before put his perpendicularity to a similar test.

In this sort of *saturnalia* of the lower order, those whose lives are spent in dutiful obsequiousness, and obe-

dient awe of their superiors, delight to avenge themselves for the privations and taciturnity inflicted on board in this respect, by telling their officers sometimes a little of their minds from some snug corner of the house, or masked battery in the gallery. Exemplary, indeed, must that officer be, who cannot thus occasionally learn something from hints of this nature; by some one under his orders; who occasionally will avail himself of this opportunity to awaken the recollection, or disturb the self-composure of his superior, or commander. From whatever quarter these shots proceed, they are received with unconcealed glee and delight by the *Jacks*, who are quick in appreciating the character or peculiar foible of the subject of this embarrassing railery.

Sir Harry, who was certain he had recognised the humorous offender by his voice, was convulsed with laughter; whilst the last sally was received with tumultuous applause. The actor, with that modesty which seems an *essential* in the histrionic profession, took the compliment of course to himself, and forgetting it was his duty to be drunk, stepped forward and soberly made three stiff staid bows to the house—a mistake which did not fail to set the better informed part of the audience once more in a titter.

As the tragedy degenerated into joke, the farce seemed more in earnest; nor will this be a matter of surprise, since, in the latter, the audience were permitted to mingle in the performance with the actors; and the zest might be considered to be heightened by the spirit of rivalry, with which one part of the house played up to the other. The contest was for some time dubious—for though the performers excelled in ranting, the blue jackets certainly eclipsed them in roaring.

At the conclusion of the fourth act the curtain dropped.—The *real* business of the night now commenced. The bottle, but not the glass, went round, together with the healths of many female *divinities*, not named in any, save the sailor's mythology. Like Milton's Eve, the fair were "nothing loth;" they did justice to the toast in honour of the sex: and might, without any great effort of imagination, be considered so many Hebes.

from the alacrity they displayed in pushing about the jorum.

The sailors were now at liberty to disport themselves after their own fashion : and a confusion of tongues and voices ensued never equalled, since the far-famed babble of Babel. This over anxiety to create and circulate mirth and enjoyment, for a while defeated itself. A great authority observes, that

If Music is the food of love, /
It is the food of folly.

Most of them were victims to the *tender* passion.—The orchestra was, therefore, compelled “to play on,” according to the momentary and fitful preference of the arbiters and arbitresses of taste in the regions above. By a courtesy, for which the hardy sons of ocean are distinguished, the option was at once yielded to female taste—and a soft Syren of forty, and about half as many stone in weight, with eyes which had acquired an added lustre from the contrasted purple glow of her *marked* and commanding countenance, fixed at once their wavering choice ; by calling, in a delicate *Soprano* voice, on the “musicianers to play up *Jack’s Delight*.” This judicious call was hailed with enthusiasm.—The “College Hornpipe” followed, the devil’s-tattoo accompanying, drummed by the heels of the whole ship’s company, until the house trembled throughout.—Still the curtain remained stationary, owing to the sable hero of the tragedy having, in his anxiety to perform his part with spirit, forgotten how he had chidden Cassio, like whom he had himself “put an enemy in his mouth to steal away his brains.” This wight was now undergoing the penal process of having his head soused in water, and being forced to ‘swill’ vinegar in large potions, in order to subdue intoxication, and restore him to his recollection of the part.

The audience having exhausted their stock of practical entertainment, and becoming fatigued with their own performances, which soon lost its zest from the circumstance of its no longer being a running accompaniment to, but a very inadequate substitute for the drama itself, became clamorous, and loudly vociferated for the rising of the curtain.

"I say, folksell, there ;—why don't you clew up the curtain?" said a young sailor, almost out of hail of female society, and whose situation was therefore the more likely to engender ill-humour. "Blow my precious limbs!—are we to wait here all night?"

A concert of cat-calls, groans and hisses followed, marked and loud enough to alarm the manager, who, apprehensive that some mischief might ensue to his property, opened the stage-door and thrust out his friend Iago to appease the audience. He seemed to come forward with great reluctance—nor was it wonderful.—The orator's mission was to make an apology, and that apology was to be extempore. There was another reason why he should feel little at his ease. The moment he appeared, he felt he had no friend—*Jack's* prejudices against his conduct were insuperable. He had acted the part of the insidious assassin too well, not to fall under more than a suspicion, that he was naturally cut-out for the part. Having formed a rough calculation by the eye, of the numerical force of the sexes in the house, and finding the male predominated, he judiciously adopted a novel expression in opening his address :—

"Gentlemen and ladies."—This was an indignity offered to the fair which seamen are sure to resent.—A general hubbub and uproar ensued.

"Where's your manners, you two-faced rascal?" exclaimed one.

"Off—off—top your boom," cried another.

The ear of an actor is peculiarly sensitive to censure, even when undeserved ; and there are well attested instances, where men of professional celebrity have, for peace sake, yielded their own good taste to the obstinate prejudices of the vulgar.—Iago retraced his steps and corrected his error ; and, in defiance of the grammatical rule, as to which is the worthier gender, gave the post of honour to the fair, and recommenced—

"Ladies and gentlemen—"

This part of his address was repeated before he had arranged what was to follow.—He looked wistfully now to the manager (not to the *prompter* for the cue). He heard the "catch-word" indulgence ; and proceeded—

"Ladies and gentlemen—"

"That won't do—none o' your gammon—you backbiting beggar," roared a topman.

Iago, however, resumed.—"The gentleman—I regret to say—who has done us the favour——"

"Has the *honour*," was heard in an angry tone from the door-way.—The correction was instantaneous.

"Who has the honour," repeated the actor, "to represent the part of Othello—before this—". (pausing)

"*Respectable* audience," said the manager again.

"Before this respectable audience, claims—ladies and gentlemen—your kind indulgence——"

"Indulgence—le d——d.— You ought to be keel-hauled—you mischief-making beggar!" exclaimed the boatswain's mate, in the pit.

"For that gentleman, we solicit—that is, the manager solicits your indulgence."

"Curse you, I wish I'd gone out myself," growled the manager, closing the stage-door and leaving his ill-starred representative to that fate which already appeared pretty certain, from a shower of yellow rinds, which now descended on the stage as thickly as the fruit itself bestrews the orange groves of St. Michael's after a hurricane.

"But, gentlemen and ladies—I mean, ladies and gentlemen—the gentleman has been so overcome—"("Off, off")—so excited from completely identifying himself——"

Here an enormous orange went bang past his head, which, luckily for his speech, he could not perceive, owing to his confusion and the glare of the lights on his eyes.—The missile struck the curtain with the report of that of a bass drum.—Although startled, the apologist continued—

"So identified himself with the character—the—a—arduous character of the principal hero of the piece, that the manager trusts you will, ladies and gentlemen, excuse him, should he be *less successful* in the rest—a—the remainder of the part——"

Here he was preparing to make a parting bow to the angry, ill-appeased audience, when a shower of miscella-

neous missiles descended on the stage, a short distance from him, and a well directed apple, robbed his head of the plumed Spanish hat and artificial curls, which concealed his baldness.—In evident alarm, not unmingled with rage, at this exposure, the aged personator of the young Venetian officer picked up his wig, and made as rapid a retreat as if the Turk or ‘Ottamites’ were at his heels.

Slowly now the curtain rose, Iago reappearing only to be afresh disconcerted by his discouraging reception in that revolting scene of flagrant treachery, where, whilst the already wounded and prostrate Roderigo is stabbed by him, the malignant and hypocritical fiend exclaims—
“Oh, villain !”

“Kill men, i’ the dark—where be those bloody thieves ?”

“Bloody thieves, indeed !—only hear *that* !” exclaimed several at once, whilst another swore with an earnestness which displayed intense *sentiment*—

“Dowse my top-lights, if I wouldn’t make one to run that butchering hæggar up to the yard-arm without benefit o’ clargy !”

This was too much for Burton.—The sombre gloom in which he had been wrapped so long yielded to the influence of the hour ; and he could not refrain from laughing heartily at this pregnant proof of the simplicity of sailors’ habits of thinking, and generous warmth of feeling : a feeling, too, which, singular to say, had been excited by mere theatric illusion.

But whatever excitation these honest susceptible souls had previously suffered, was merely as dust in the balance, compared with the tumult of grief, and paroxysm of rage, which filled every beating bosom, when the jealous Moor, now more savage by the remaining effects of liquor, unfolded, in the deep, impressive language of the poet, the deadly purpose with which he approached his sleeping bride.—The shouts became alarming. Volleys of imprecations were hurled at his head—his limbs—his life.

“What !” said one of the rudest of the crew,—“can

the black brute cut her life-lines ?—She's a reg'lar-built angel,—and as like my Bet as two peas."

"Aye," said a messmate,—“it all comes of being jealous, and that's all as one as mad ;—but you know, if he's as good as his word, he's sure to be hanged,—that's one comfort !”

When the Moor seized her in bed by the throat, Desdemona shrieking for permission to repeat but one short prayer—and he rancorously exclaims, in attempting to strangle her—

“It is too late !”—the house, as it is said a French audience had done ere now, could endure no more ; and the sailors rose in their places, giving the most alarming indications of angry excitement, and of a determination to mingle in the murderous scene below.

“I'm d——d, Dick, if I can stand it any longer,” said the spokesman of the gallery.—“You're no man, if you can sit and look on quietly,—hands off, you blood-thirsty nigger,” he vociferated, and threw himself over the side of the gallery in a twinkling ; clambering down by a pillar into the boxes, and scrambled across the pit, over every person in his way, till he reached the noisy boat-swain's mate.—Him ho ‘challenged to the rescue,’ and exclaimed—

“Now's your time, Ned—Pipe the boarders away—all hands, damme ! if you're a man as loves a woman.—Now go it,” said he, and dashed furiously over all obstacles,—fiddles, flutes, and fiddlers. Smash went the foot lights—Cæsar had passed the rubicon. The contagion of feeling became general ; and his trusty legions, fired with the ambition that inspired their leader, followed, sweeping all before them, till the whole male population of the theatre crowded the stage *en masse*, amid shouts of encouragement, or shrieks of terror :—outraging, by their mistaken humanity, all the propriety of this touching drama ; and, for once, rescuing the gentle Desdemona from the deadly grasp of the murderous Moor, who fled in full costume, dagger in hand, from the house, and through the dark streets of Dock, until he reached his home in a state of inconceivable affright.

The scene of confusion which followed, it would be

'fruitless to attempt to describe.—All was riot and uproar.—The path of the invaders was strewn with ruin.—On the first alarm, the manager had sent for the military, who just arrived as the 'boarders' took full possession of the fore-castle, and were in the act of giving three cheers as a token of victory. In such a state of excitement and triumph, it was natural to expect that order could not easily be restored.

The appearance of the red-coats aroused once more the riotous propensities and indignation of these champions of injured innocence. The attempt to dispossess them of that spot on which they had conquered, was promptly resented.—A violent scuffle ensued—severe contusions were the consequence; and had it not been for the active interference of the frigate's officers in quelling the tumult, and the moderation of those who had arms in their hands, the capture of the ring-leaders would probably not have been effected without the loss of valuable life.

The stage was now deserted. Every actor had fled as though 'the avengers of blood' had been behind them.' The simple-hearted sons of the sea were, by their own act, thus deprived of the Farce. But it could not be said they were disappointed. Every man likes to be the hero of his own tale; and the tars had concluded the evening *con amore* by a tragic entertainment, in which they congratulated themselves on having figured, very conspicuously, as the principal performers.

Indeed, after all was over, Sir Harry, whilst shaking hands with poor Burton, and welcoming his return, remarked—

"This affray should be a lesson to him hereafter," adding, with a laugh, "that the *Flora's* were too much of amateurs to be trusted in a theatre, lest they should abandon the service, and take to the stage."

CHAPTER XVI.

THIN POTATIONS.

I am for all waters.

SHAKSPEARE.

ON the evening of the second day after their departure, the veteran and his party arrived at their destination, and surrendering themselves to the pilotage of the post-boy, were set down at the Plough Inn, which, at that day, was as remarkable for being the resort of the most distinguished company, as for the exorbitancy of its charges.

Fatigued with travelling, the ladies, after an early supper, retired to rest, and Tiller attended his master to the room set apart for his reception. Having so long been accustomed to sleep in a cot, he felt equally as uncomfortable on this, as on the preceding evening, in betaking himself to that, in his opinion, highly objectionable dormitory—a four-post bed; wondering once more how he could be so silly, or Tiller so stupid, as not to have stowed away a spare cot in the boot of the carriage, so as to ensure him one comfort at least, despite of his change of residence. —Tom endeavoured to console his master, by assuring him, that ‘if he could only find out in the whole town half a bolt of canvas, and borrow a needle and palm, he would knock him up, in less than eight-and-forty hours, a cot and canopy fit for a nabob.’

Reconciled, in some degree, by this assurance, and his *valet’s* remark, that ‘these inland Hottentots understood nothing about the comforts of life,’ he prepared to undress himself, Tiller first carefully examining whether his bed was well aired, and ‘ranging,’ as he termed it, all his master’s traps and rigging for the morning.

Like invalids in general, the old gentleman felt anxious to have the benefit of a consultation on his health, and, for want of better advice, called in that of Tiller.

‘Well, Thomas, I think I feel better already for the

journey," said Crank, with the tone of a man who makes an assertion for the purpose of sounding the sentiments of another.

"That may be, Sir," answered Tom, who had now removed the gaiter from his master's tender leg; "but I can't say I like to see this here swelling, Sir," continued he, pointing to the limb which he raised for the veteran's inspection—

"Swelling!—aye, so there is, but there you're wrong,—that's all in my favour."

"You wern't, I take it, Sir, always that way o' thinking—partickler, when I had to clap on the parceling of a morning."

"Oh, but it's a good sign, for all that—and so would Mister Senna say, if he was here—he'd tell you, it was leaving the upper works—"

"Yes, Sir, but it can't be in a worse place, than in your floor futtocks."

"That's as you think," said Crank; "but I fancy myself better already.—It must be the change of air—"

"Change of wind, Sir?—Bless you, that can't be, she hasn't veered a point since we started."

On this subject, Tom would have cavilled with the college of physicians, and despised the *dictum* of the Meteorological Society.—"It was rank nonsense," he would say, 'to distinguish them,—air was wind, and wind was air, all the world over—'

"Well, never mind the wind," replied his master, "we must now take to the water—and do you have a sharp look-out in the morning, and sound the well—"

"What well, Sir?"

"The well, man! where the company drink the waters: you must take Boots to pilot you—mind what you're about, and make me a full report of every thing on your return—I shouldn't like to lose any time—so I'll commence my course to-morrow."

In this instance, the simple-hearted commodore did not stand unsupported by authority. Many a votary of medical fashion has resorted to this region of renovation, equally uninformed as to the medical, and sometimes contradictory properties of the different species of water.

issuing here from the bowels of the earth.—Like them he came to drink the Cheltenham waters, let them be what they might ; as Antony “ came to bury Cæsar, not to praise him.” It is also in the recollection of the reader, that his visit was really unconnected with any bodily ailment whatever—and that to him such a journey, at this period of the year, was more likely to be productive of injury than benefit.

Armed with these imperfect instructions, Tiller was stirring betimes in the morning, and was seen making the best of his way down the High-street, conducted by a lad, whom he had procured for the occasion, from among the stable boys.

The morning was overcast, with drizzling rain, which, added to the advanced state of the season, occasioned the street to be less thronged than usual ; but the company was sufficiently numerous, to render Tiller’s appearance more singular by contrast. His *Cicerone* began to display the talent and intelligence he possessed, for the part he had undertaken, by pointing out, almost as soon as they set out, the localities and peculiarities of the place.

For the benefit of such of our readers as are, like Tiller, unacquainted with Cheltenham at that day, it may be necessary to premise, that this celebrated watering place consisted of a principal street, called the High-street, of about a mile in length. Near the centre of the town was situated the church, a venerable old pile, built in the form of a cross, with a steeple of proportions, so tall, spiral, and light, that it had before this period, swerved from its perpendicularity, and has since been restored, after a model, strongly reminding us of that unique, though much calumniated spire in front of Langham Church. This stands in a church-yard, shaded by luxuriant limes, and intersected by the walks, which conducted the valetudinarian to a small bridge thrown over a rivulet, beyond which, the ‘ well-walk,’ or grand morning promenade, commences.—In the centre was the principal well, known by the name of Mother Forty’s Well ; from which the wags of that day used to say, the good old dame drew *aqua-fortis*. On the left of this well was a pump-room, frequented by

the visitants, more particularly during damp weather, for the purpose of partaking of the water, which was pumped up, or conducted thither from the several springs. Beyond this, the splendid promenade was continued, between rows of noble elms, between which, at intervals, were placed garden-chairs, where the delicate female or sickly invalid, sought shelter from the ardour of the summer sun. The effect of the *coup d'oeil*, in which so many fashionably dressed persons were observed moving to and fro, or saluting and conversing together in groupes, whilst the eye reposed on the graceful spire, closing the verdant vista, had always been considered peculiarly interesting and agreeable.

Crossing the churchyard, and leaving, as most persons do who repair to Cheltenham, the church itself behind him, he soon found himself in the well-walk, or grand promenade described. And he and his companion had hardly passed the stile leading from the churchyard, ere the old sailor's attention was attracted by the tall stately trees which formed this handsome avenue. Tiller, than whom no dealer knew better the value of timber of this nature, interrupted the explanations of his loquacious guide, and exclaimed—

“My eyes!” (by the bye, this was a favourite imprecation, if it might be called by so harsh a name, in the old man's mouth, who always forgot he had but one)—“My eyes! *there's* timber for you—What trees d'ye call them there?”

“They be elms, I reckon,” said his equerry.

“What a sin, to see such fine timber a wasting in that sort o' way—Why, there's enough to lay down clinker-built boats for every ship in the whole British navy.”

“Ah, thin, my ould buck, what d'ye know about the navvy?—Sure you arn't after going to say, *you're* a sailor?” interrupted a voice behind him. Tiller turned round, to face this jovial railer, for such the volatile effusion thus uttered in a broad Hibernian accent, proclaimed him to be. He was rather surprised, to find there was no stranger near him, except a tall, handsome young man, dressed in the very pink of the fashion, whose genteel exterior, and good humoured countenance, induced him

to doubt he could be the utterer of the foregoing impertinence. His new acquaintance, for the young gentleman seemed not to stand upon the ceremony of introduction to invest him with that title, and its accompanying privileges, was determined not to leave him long in the dark as to his identity, so renewed the attack *a la mode Irlandaise*, by starting this truly national interrogatory—

“Sure a raal sailor wouldn’t be coming to look for salt water on the dry land?”

Thus reviled on a professional, and therefore to him a sore point, the offended seaman darted on him a look of scorn, which unfortunately betrayed his optical defect, and opened to the voluble Irishman a fresh topic of mingled raillery and invective.

“I say, my sea Cyclops, what’s become of th’ other day light?—Did you lose that in a skrimmage at Tower-stairs with the pressgang? or was it part of a wallopping at Wapping?”

“No—you pye-awe—it’s part of a whopping you wouldn’t relish.—But *you* never smelt powder, I warrant.—Did you ever hear—no, not you—did you ever hear o’ the twelfth of April?”

“What twelfth of April, my old Nestor of the deep?” replied he.

“Why—” returned the tar, with ineffable contempt—“who the h—ll ever heard of any other but the *one*?—I knew” added he, turning round on his heel, “you were nothing more or less nor an Irish tailor.”

Tom had hardly recovered from the effect of the hiccuping laugh, with which he closed this mutually complimentary colloquy, than he felt the tintinnabulum of his ear affected by a sensation which occasioned a crowd of juvenile reminiscences (albeit asleep for many years) to awake in his mind.—This inroad on his sensibilities was solely to be attributed to a strain which struck upon his organs of hearing—in other words, an instrumental band in the neighbouring pump-room at this moment struck up the well-known country dance, “Drops of brandy—” which so tickled his sensorium, that, to the astonishment of his stupid guide, and his mercurial antagonist, he placed his feet, mechanically, in what Vestris or

Degville would have termed the first position, and exclaimed—

“My precious limbs, what’s this? Here’s a reg’lar-built-spre—why, this is almost as early as they begin at the back o’-the-pint.* Well, for once, I don’t care if I have a pen’orth o’ steps myself among the swells.”

Without further intimation of his intentions, the old sailor deftly tripped it along, and was soon lost sight of by his awkward guide among the gay world within. His disappointment may be easily conceived, when, instead of finding the company engaged in dancing and hoisterous mirth, such as that which the reader will perceive he had anticipated, from recollecting the effect of that enlivening strain on his merry acquaintances of former days, he discovered they were men and women all engaged in soliciting liquor at the hands of certain females, who sat like priestesses behind an altar, or rather bar, within the ample saloon, attended by male satellites, who continued pumping up with might and main the nectarious fluid, of which all seemed so solicitous to partake.

Bustling forward among the crowd, as he perceived was the fashion in this miniature world; where, as in the greater, every one, from the healthy, fresh-coloured Gloucestershire gentleman to the bilious invalid, or tawny Anglo-Indian, was struggling for precedence, and eagerly soliciting a preference at the hands of these fair dispensers of capricious favour; he soon cleared his way through an assemblage which seemed little anxious to contend with so rude a suitor, and halted to take breath right in front of a young Quakeress, who was employed in serving the company.

“Come, come,” said Tom, rubbing his hands with evident satisfaction, as he beheld the comely girl pouring from a green bottle into a large tumbler, a clear liquor, of whose ingredients he was ignorant, though sufficiently well known under the refined term “*solution*,” by amateur spa-drinkers, and chemical analyzers of the liquid on which they *live*—“Come,” said he,—“it’s easy to

* Portsmouth Point—Celebrated for the number of Temples erected by Christians in modern times, to the idolatrous worship of Terpsichore, Bacchus, and Venus.

see, there's more nor *water* taken in here. Well, I'll say *that* for the old woman, I never seed her take to drink so early in the morning." Here it may be doubted whether a fellow, who so licentiously could wag his tongue as to the reputation of the fair, alluded to his wife or his mistress. "But, it seems," continued he, "your quality may take their drops whenever they please."

He was particularly struck with the singularity of the applications to be served, which were made, as it were, numerically, although sufficiently irregularly to puzzle him in endeavouring to account to himself why the higher numbers should often precede the less.

"*Four* for me," exclaimed one.

"*Two* this time," said a second.

A delicate damsel preferred a petition for *Three*.

A healthy, smiling votary of field sports, in a green frock coat, and equipped for the chase, the companion of the lady just mentioned, hesitatingly whispered in the fair Quakeress' ear:—

"Number one, my dear, if you have it," as if convinced the less he had of it the better.

But it was the frequent applications for the contents of the green bottle which bewildered the fancy of old Tiller, and confirmed his previous suspicion that the liquor contained in it was no other than his old favourite—gin. Still he was at a loss to understand, whether the number by which they regulated their calls had a reference to the persons themselves, or the number of waters to be mixed with their liquor. He recollected the practice in men-of-war, when, if any were missing at the time the purser's steward served out the grog, he forfeited his call and was put down last in the list; so he prudently resolved not to lose his, and advancing briskly up to the marble table, applied in his turn, archly winking with his one eye at the girl, while he said, in a half whisper—

"Naked for me, Ma'am. You needn't be shy o' the bottle wi' me."

Here a scorbutic, bilious-looking patient applied for number *five*.

At this Tiller seemed rather disconcerted, but soon cheered up, and muttered to himself—

"Well! I'm glad to find they don't go so far as *six-water-grog*."

Whether through archness or simplicity, the female friend complied with the sailor's request, and as the phrase runs in the well-walk, "tipped him a drencher," giving him a treble dose of the infusion.

Frost and thaw,—light and darkness,—fire and tow, were never such irreconcilable enemies as salt-water and the inner coats of Tom's susceptible stomach. The first gulp went down perforce—the next was in his mouth but a second, ere it was expelled through his teeth, nose, and, it might be said, eye-lids, (for they too glistened with soft moisture,) with a force and fury that overwhelmed all present with dismay, and damaged many a dress of costly fabric and beauteous dye.

"What!" said the enraged tar, his inside smarting with the triple saline draught, and his fury roused by the insult he imagined was now offered—"What, ye *she*-sanctificator, d'ye think I haven't had salt-water enough in my day, but I must now swallow it here inland among a parcel o' lubbers. See here, you straight-haired jade—don't come that rig over the captain—or I'm dowsed, if you do, but he'll clear the decks, and make a clean sweep with his stick of every glass in the tap."

Having thus vented his wrath on his fair enemy, the irritable valet made his exit, and repaired to his master's bed-side to report progress.

CHAPTER XVII.

CEREMONIES.

All form is formless, order orderless,
Save what is opposite to England's love.

KING JOHN.

DYSPEPSIA, gout, and hypochondriacism, had chained our friend Crank fast to his bed, for ten days subsequent to his arrival; during which period he had not failed to learn from Tiller, technically, and in due form, whether he had 'sounded the well'—'what water he had,'*—and what was the description of persons he had met with in his cruise on their present station.

It is needless to say, that Tiller felt a pride in pouring forth his whole confidence into the bosom of the man whom, on earth, he most esteemed. But, even had he not been so communicative, his singular and *outré* debut in the well-walk and pump-room excited general curiosity, as to who could be, nautically speaking, 'master and owner' of so unique a being. Taciturnity never had been Tiller's *forte*. He always liked to tell his mind, but more particularly where the subject was agreeable; when it might be easily seen that he was descended, by the mother's side, from the far-famed Andrew *Marvel*. There was another cause, though not the primary one, why the commodore became so rapidly an object of interest, which was derived from the exuberant good feeling of the man towards his master. This requires explanation:—since his arrival at Cheltenham, though not that sort of active station on which he was likely to earn promotion, Crank had become a flag officer—not that he could appeal to Steele's list for his credentials, or that it had ever been notified to him by

* The term used on inquiring the depth of water in which the ship swims; or, in case of springing a leak, the quantity within her hold.

the secretary of the Admiralty, but that fame, the unbought herald of desert, had, through her trumpet Thomas, sounded his merits, and magnified his achievements to such a degree, that Tiller, and all who heard him, might have agreed in their own minds, that if he were not an admiral he *ought* to be one. Tom felt, as he expressed it, that 'among a set of inland know-nothing lubbers,' he need not hesitate to impute to the veteran a degree of wealth corresponding to his accredited rank; and to the latter circumstance may be attributed, in part, the very general disposition which was displayed to cultivate his acquaintance by the Oriental seekers of health, or the Occidental seekers of wealth, who may be said to constitute, almost exclusively, this Indian and Irish colony.

All this kindness and care, on the part of Tiller, was destined to produce a harvest of annoyances to his master—nor will this be a matter of surprise, when it is recollected how singular the old gentleman was in his notions and turn of thinking. The first shock his nerves underwent originated in a circumstance for which he could not at all account—namely, the visit of a gentleman, styling himself, as appeared by his card, "The Master of the Ceremonies"—a title which induced our old friend (who, like the Litchfield literary giant, would as soon have picked a pocket as sported a pun on another occasion) to remark with warmth—

"Master of the ceremonies, indeed! He seems, Tom, to stand upon very little *ceremony*, in thrusting himself on people who want to know nothing about him."

"No more do I, Sir," said Tiller, "every one knows there's a master—a master's-mate—and a master-at-arms;—but I'm blowed if I ever heard of such a rating afore as master o' the *cerrymonies*."

"What!" continued Crank, "shall a fellow I never saw in my life dare to intrude his acquaintance on his superior?—damme, it's downright disrespect—contempt, by the Lord Harry—I wish I only had him in blue water—I'd teach him—"

"I wish *we* had, Sir, and a few more on 'em too," said this pattern of fidelity, who just at this moment recollected the practical joke played upon his susceptible stomach, by

the fair Quakeress at the pump-room—"I wish we had, Sir, we'd teach 'em better manners."

Crank seemed still to chew the matter over, and at length exclaimed, like one who had just made his mind up—"I'll know the rights of this—tell the landlord I want him."

Tiller perfectly concurred in opinion with his master, that an explanation, if not an apology, was necessary on the occasion; and while he asked him whether he would have pea-soup to-day, in the same tone of indifference, remarked that "he had seen a man shot for less."

"The landlord in due time appeared, and was accosted, on his entrance, by the invalid, who rather angrily inquired—

"What's the meaning, Mister Landlord, of *all* this? You seem to be a strange set of fellows here:—devilish free! Here's a chap has been here *three* times to-day already, bothering me with his cards; and, what's worse, damme, if, after all, the fellow has left his name."

"Quite right, Sir;" said his host, "I fancy you'll find it all right."

"All right! What, to bother me three times a day, as if I haven't enough on my hands to swallow those doses every two or three hours," said Crank, pointing to the chimney-piece, where a formidable array of phials was displayed.

"All right, Sir; I fancy you'll find he only came once, Sir."

"Then why the deuce the three cards?"

"A mark of respect, Sir—etiquette, Sir—a card for yourself, Sir: and a card, I fancy, for each of the ladies; besides, Sir, it's his business. You know, Sir, every one of those card fetches him a guinea. It's all right, Sir; he gets sometimes of a *morning* more out of the house than I do, who beggared myself to build it. But it's quite right, Sir. If there was no Master of the ceremonies, there would be no rooms:—if no rooms there would be no company;—and if there was no company there would be no Cheltenham," concluded this profound logician.

"A guinea each!—a guinea, humph! I see. It's well

he doesn't come oftener. Dreadful expensive place—why, —that 's one-and-twenty guineas a week,—and if he finds this fellow of mine here 'twill be nearly thirty!—and all for *what*, I should like to know?"

"It 's all right, Sir," reiterated his host;—"but you 're wrong, Sir; for the three guineas are for the season. In fact, Sir, it is the only payment he gets in return for the attention and civility he pays to the company who attend his rooms."

"Curse his civility! What, are people who come here for the benefit of their health to be compelled to pay *head-money* to a d—d dancing master for a bow and a scrape?"

"It 's all right, you may depend, Sir. It 's not the only ceremony the gentleman contrives to master: he 's an excellent match maker; and what 's more, Sir," continued the innkeeper, in a significant tone, "he gets partners, I fancy, for many young ladies for life."

"Oh! if that 's the case, I 'll warrant he 's hard work for his money: at least, if the men are as hard to please as I was."

"Why, yes, Sir, if the easiest card he had to play was merely dropping his own at a gentleman's door, 'twould be all well enough; but you may depend on it, Sir, it 's very hard to be always doing civil when people are not paid for it."

"That 'll do—that 'll do, landlord," said Crank, while his host took the hint and retired.

"Doing civil, indeed!" continued the veteran. "Hang this fellow too, I suppose he 'll be sending in a long bill for *his* civility."

"That he will, Sir," said Tiller; "and if you takes my advice, Sir, you 'll never take none on it, and then you know, Sir, he can't have the face to *charge* you for it. Better cut and run, Sir, and take one o' them there flush-floor'd cottages like our own. You will have no trouble in going up and down ladders from one deck to another; besides, if you takes the water you 'll have no time to—"

"What?"

Here Mrs. Crank entered, and interrupted Tom's explanation.

"Well, brother, I trust the chastising hand of Heaven has at length moderated its affliction!"

"Chastising! What d' ye mean? Have I broken any of the articles of war? One would think *I* had just received three dozen, and was cast off from the grating. You 'd be a good friend to the master-at-arms. Talking of masters, perhaps 't was you sent that Master o' the ceremonies here!"

"Why should you suspect any such thing?" said the matron; "it is the custom every where for a Master of the ceremonies to call, on the arrival of a stranger—indeed it 's a mark of respect."

"Hang all such respect when a man pays for it. Three guineas is too much for any one's cringing and bowing."

"Well, brother, custom is the arbiter in these cases. Your common sense, nor my fixed conviction of the folly of compliance will not affect the question. No one can feel a more conscientious disinclination to comply with regulations originating in worldly-mindedness and disregard of religion; but at Rome we should do as Rome does, otherwise you might as well be out of the world."

"World! what have I to do with the world? I 've left it these ten years; but you, who are always talking of being *above* it, seem now to think of nothing else. Perhaps you mean to sport a toe at the ball, and think this fellow will get you a partner—the landlord tells me he 's a great match-driver."

"The insinuation, Captain Crank, is unworthy of both me and yourself; the only motive I can have in countenancing this vanity and folly, arises from an anxiety (in which I certainly will do you the justice to think you participate) that our dear, amiable girl should not feel herself neglected, or differently circumstanced from other young persons of her own rank. To that motive I hope, with all your singular prejudices, you will do justice."

"Why, for the matter, or the motive, that 's neither here nor there; but I will say, you always feel about my child as I like you to feel; and if you were not such a jumble of religion and policy, perhaps I 'd go further, and say, there was not a better mother breathing. So hang the expense,—*he* shall have his head-money."

Here the waiter announced that a party of ladies were in the adjoining room, who called to pay their respects.

and handed her a card, on which was written, "Mrs. and the Misses Selby."

Mrs. Crank immediately left the room to greet her visitants, who were old acquaintances, and formerly neighbours. The interview served to revive an intimacy, which had for some years been suspended. With these ladies there was a young lady just arrived from London, whose delicate state of health might almost be said to heighten the interest, excited by her speaking eyes, beautiful features, and fragile form. She was younger than the veteran's niece, by about a year, and was second daughter of the Earl of Normanton. Her soft, easy manners spoke her gentle blood; and her introduction into the best society, had eminently contributed to give the last finish to that which nature had rendered in all respects, save strength of constitution, perfection. Mrs. Hemans, a lady about Mrs. Crank's own age, and aunt to Lady Helen, was now, for the first time, also introduced to the veteran's family. As the latter were persons in a superior walk of life, the visit was highly acceptable to Mrs. Crank, who did her utmost to detain and interest them, as well as her previous acquaintances, who were distant relations of the earl. It may be easily conceived, that this visit was in due time returned, and proved the commencement of an interchange of civilities, which, in a short time, introduced Mrs. and Miss Crank into the better order of society; and from this circumstance, and possibly from the rumoured singularity of the as yet unknown old *admiral*, many of the visitants of Cheltenham became introduced, and subsequently called on the new comers. Most were prompted by curiosity in making this visit; and not a few complied with the wishes of others more civil or curious than themselves, in the expectation that it might perhaps afford them opportunities to detect or expose the peculiarities or blemishes of their recently acquired acquaintance. None were without a motive: though it will be in better taste to defer the explanation of its nature and object, at least for the present:—Some were agreeably surprised by the result of their visit, because they found, that notwithstanding all they had heard of the strange peculiarities of the commo-

dore, whom they did not see,—that his sister-in-law was an intelligent, polite lady, of a fine commanding aspect and person, while her daughter, by her affability and beauty, won all hearts : others were as much mortified, because in the polite conduct, and steady demeanour of the mother, or the innocent gayety of the daughter, they found nothing to disparage. The younger visitants were in general so pleased with Emily, as not only to solicit the favour of her society, whenever she was at leisure, but circulated after their departure, so flattering a description of her beauty and sweetness of temper, as to create a corresponding wish among their acquaintances to share her agreeable society. It may easily, therefore, be imagined, that as she had already the character of a beauty, and the repute of being a fortune, her entrance into society was not impeded by any of those bars, which oppose young ladies, who cannot boast either of these attractions.

The curiosity which had been awakened as to Crank, was soon destined to be gratified. A fine morning, and a slight respite from pain, at length enabled the veteran to appear in the well-walk, to make his observations on the place and company in person. Being unable to walk, he came in that sort of conveyance, so common at Cheltenham, a wheeled-chair, which was drawn, or rather propelled by Tiller 'abaft,' while the invalid, with a good humoured smile at the singularity of the conveyance, took the helm in hand, and steered himself according to Thomas's pilotage.

Tiller, who was expert at 'cunning' craft of every description, and who directed the course of the veteran's chair, afforded to many considerable amusement by his technical language and singular deportment.

"Mind your port-helm," said he. "Keep the steeple open with the trees—there we are, Sir,—right in mid-channel—steady—e—a—starboard with all, Sir."

"Starboard it is," echoed the commodore.

"Starboard *yet*, i' you please, Sir."

"What, still? why,—she gripes most confoundedly, Thomas!"

One or two of those, nice bilious and interesting looking, gentlemen, who had taken their "*second tumbler*," and already experienced some squeamishness in the ab-

dominal region, seemed suddenly 'taken aback,' as if they sympathized with this nautical allusion; and were perceived as suddenly 'altering their course.'

"Gripes ~~very~~ much indeed," repeated the veteran.

"Well, Sir," said Tiller, "we must only brail up abaft. —But if we gripe now, what 'ill it be byne bye, when we come to take in our water!"

"Why, yes, Thomas, we musn't bring her too much by the head."

"I know it brought many *there* oftener than they wished to'ther morning."

Notwithstanding the anxiety Crank had expressed, to betake himself to the use of the waters as speedily as possible, he made the circuit of Mother Forty's Well without 'shortening sail;' and even coasted all round the adjoining pump-room without coming once to an anchor. The singularity of his appearance had, from the first, rendered him an object of very general observation. The crowd which surrounded his chair, with looks which simply denoted their surprise, soon rather unceremoniously began to put questions to each other, little complimentary to their own delicacy, or the veteran's feelings. The smile, which had become general, soon relaxed into a titter of laughter among the younger and more thoughtless part of the *cortege*. This was too much for his keen sensibility to *ridicule*; and this man, by nature bold as a lion, and who, through the impulse of duty or glory, would now in the decline of life cheerfully have run the gauntlet through the fire of an enemy's fleet, was diverted from his steady purpose by their rude curiosity; and soon took to flight, abashed by the petty impertinence of a crowd composed chiefly of silly nurse-maids, and sillier children.

Tiller, in compliance with the commodore's commands "to put about, and make all possible sail on the craft," whirled him along in silence at a rapid rate—the veteran shaping his course homeward, vowing that "he would rather at once be d——d than stared to death."

CHAPTER XVIII.

NEW CHARACTERS.

A young unmarried man, with a good name
And fortune, has an awkward part to play ;
For good society is but a game.

BYRON.

THE good people of Cheltenham, but more particularly that part of its female population, consisting of young ladies who had hands and hearts to give away, or mothers who had marriageable daughters to dispose of, was, about this time, put into that agreeable sort of excitation, so often the result at watering-places, of the appearance among them of a new face with the repute of a large fortune.

Having mentioned the class of persons likely to be affected by this arrival, it will be easily conjectured, that the individual now about to be introduced was a hero, not a heroine.

Independently of the courtesy, which permits writers of novels to dub, with the title of hero, the principal personages who figure in their mimic drama, this new male acquaintance had other more legitimate claims to that title. He was an officer just returned from our army in India, in which he had distinguished himself, and obtained a majority at a rather unusually early period of service. But these objects were considered as of comparatively small importance, by the bright eyes of Cheltenham, when put in the scale with other qualifications he possessed, to conciliate the favour of both young and old. He was young and handsome—and through the preference of a deceased friend, altogether unconnected with him by family, who, being childless, had left him his heir, solely on condition that he should adopt his name ; he was rich, and sported all the attributes of wealth, which were in themselves sufficient to render him a favourite with the seniors of the sex,

Among other subjects of conversation introduced, when Mrs. Crank and her daughter last called on Mrs. Selby, the wealthy young major was mentioned.

"Have you, Mrs. Crank," said the latter, "seen our last arrival from India?"

"No," replied Mrs. Crank, very unaffectedly, "I never read that part of the papers—not, to my knowledge, having either acquaintance or relative in that quarter of the globe."

"Answered with precision, and to the very letter,—I protest!" said Mrs. Selby—"you speak, as Shakspeare would have said, 'by the card.'"

"Oh, Ma means," said the eldest of the young ladies, "the late arrival at Cheltenham—You know the gray horses and handsome curricule."

Here a matter-of-fact lady present could not refrain from laughing, while she inquired—

"Why such things should be brought from such a distance—have we not better here?" said she.

"Oh, you mean, child, better curricles and horses—True—but the arrival I mean, is the major who drives that handsome equipage—and whom you might have seen yesterday, parading between turnpike and turnpike."

Their visitants, not yet appearing to recognise, from this description, the gentleman alluded to, the younger of the Selbys simperingly remarked—

"Oh, Major Hervey—the handsome major—he danced with Lady Helen at the rooms, the other night."

"Yes," said Mrs. Selby, looking significantly at the senior lady of the party; "he's considered quite a *catch*—already he goes by the name of the young nabob—we shall have all the girls cocking their caps at him."

"A nabob," said Emily, inquisitively, "I always understood nabobs were a sort of eastern princes—rich old men."

"Aye, but here's a young one," remarked Miss Selby.

"Yes, and extremely handsome, too," said her sister. "Why, mama, he doesn't look as if he was much burnt with the sun."

Here the lady's mother observed, "he was a little dark, to be sure—but you know dark men are always considered the handsomest."

"I don't think I should be afraid to go out myself to my uncle, next season," said the younger, "only those shocking *coups de soleil*."

Here her mother interrupted her volubility, remarking,—"No, Maria, there's no necessity for such haste either—I hope, my love, there is better fortune for you in store."

This conversation was interrupted by Mrs. Selby acquainting her friend, they were preparing to go to the rooms the succeeding night, and asking her if she intended to be present.

Mrs. Crank, under other circumstances, would have declined this invitation, as unsuitable to her serious habits—The terms, however, in which the major had been mentioned, and the very little probability of his being introduced to her daughter, by a lady who already set her heart on him for her own, decided her wavering resolution, and determined her 'to walk in the ways of vanity' for once, and accompany her daughter.

The wished for night approached; the Selbys were early in the field, and appeared, as far as ornament and expense were concerned, to have spared no pains in heightening their attractions; forming a striking contrast with the graceful simplicity of Emily's attire, who now joined them. Mrs. Crank remarked, with no small pleasure, the sensation created in the room on their entrance. Possibly she did not attribute it entirely to the charms of her daughter, while the cordiality of the Selbys experienced some drawback, probably from certain twinges in the region of the spleen, at witnessing how little nature left for art to accomplish in embellishing their young friend.

At that unrefined period of our history, we are ashamed to confess, the most elegant society of the day had so little taste as not to feel itself at all degraded, by applying themselves to those rude, those wholesome exercises, commonly yclept 'country dances'; and from the motley assembly of *demi fortunes*, and fashionables at Cheltenham, to the first nobility of the metropolis, and even the heiress of these realms, young persons constantly amused themselves in a pastime, which would now be considered derogatory to the delicacy of the veriest *grisette*, or mantua-maker, who weekly quadrilles it at Brewer-street rooms. But such is ever the unaccountable fickleness of fashion.

During the promenade, which usually precedes the formation of the "sets," their party was joined by the master of the ceremonies : and Mrs. Crank, by that affability which she was always able to assume, so far recommended herself, that he felt animated by a wish to obtain for her daughter, what he termed "a desirable partner."

The lady expressed her gratitude for his kind intention, which, she admitted, was the more necessary, as they were quite strangers at Cheltenham. She subsequently, however, availed herself of the distinction he had drawn as to a "desirable partner," and begged he would be particular in his selection, as there were but too many adventurers to be found in all public places.

During this short conversation, the eyes of Mrs. Selby and her daughter were involuntarily turned to the entrance door, as though in expectation of some valued acquisition to their party. Mrs. Crank could not avoid witnessing this anxiety ; nor was she destined to hesitate long as to its object ; for soon after the star of the ascendant made its appearance, and the hero of the Indies and ingots entered the ball-room, accompanied by one of those obsequious servants out of livery, whose assiduities are considered to be more than rapid, by the fleeting favour of the hour, and a general invitation to dinner, of which he never failed to avail himself. In fact the latter was of that respectable class of ephemeral insects, ever seen basking in the sunshine, denominated led-captains.

The Major, after having surveyed the room much in the manner of an eastern sultan, accustomed to the ceremonial of the handkerchief, his subsequent conviction accorded with his first impression on entering the room ; and repairing immediately to the master of the ceremonies, he turned the conversation on Emily, and begged to be introduced. Although the Major, like all other Indians, was a victim to the lassitude so inseparable from a residence in an enervating climate, he had determined to brave all the hazards resulting from such an application, even though, as he expressed it, "condemned to dance," rather than forego the pleasure he expected to reap from an intercourse with one who realized all the fabled loveliness of an eastern Hourii. A proposition so in unison

with his own predetermination, as well as with the sentiments and wishes of some of the parties interested, was not long in abeyance: suffice it to say, that the Major was introduced to Emily. What was his success during the evening, or in his subsequent endeavours to render himself acceptable in her eyes, will be with greater propriety reserved for future details.

CHAPTER XIX.

PAY-DAY.

Falstaff. Thou dost give me flattering busses.

Doll. By my troth, I kiss thee with a most constant heart.

Fal. I am old, I am old.

Doll. I love thee better, than I love e'er a scurvy young boy of them all.

Fal. What stuff wilt thou have a kirtle of? I shall receive money on Thursday. Thou shall have a cap to-morrow.

HENRY IV.

It may be presumed, from the urgency with which Staunch summoned Burton's services, he had little leisure to pine in moping melancholy: both his superiors having determined, it would be very desirable he should be kept as busily occupied as possible, in order to counteract that depression of spirit, which they witnessed with so much concern. The various duties attendant on fitting out—comprising 'dock-yard duty'—'taking the guard'—'answering signals'—the monotonous return of delivering the 'daily progress at the Admiral's office,' all devolved upon the languid lover; whose spirits must have proved unequal to the task, had he not been cruelly, as he thought, but humanely, as his friends believed, spurred on to more than ordinary exertions by their joint contrivance.

Their new ship had been now reported ready for sea; and an air of agitation,—an undefinable tumultuous feeling in and about the brig, seemed to betoken her probable departure, with something of the same certainty which

induces a sailor to foretel the approach of stormy weather, from its agitated precursor—the ‘ground swell.’

Nor are these symptoms confined to terrestrial indications only—for, as in the observation of natural phenomena, the sailor is wont to look to the sky, in order to fortify his speculations discernible from the movements of *celestial* bodies, including the sign ‘*Virgo*,’ occasionally terminating in ‘*Scorpio*,’ which as clearly foretel a certain *moral* phenomenon.

Have you ever, reader, seen a pay-day on board a man-of-war?—

If not,—though you may have reached the sources of the long undiscovered Nile, or slaked your thirst despite of the Guardian Dragons, at the fabled fountain from whence the mighty Niger begins its course across the thirsty waste of Africa;—though, with praise-worthy curiosity, you may have climbed by star-light the snow-clad heights, and dared the fearful avalanches of Mont Blanc, to witness from its summit the awful glory of the rising sun;—or gasped for breath, in the dangerously-attenuated atmosphere of the loftier Andes, or Himaleyan range, you may console your ambition of novelty by the reflection that there is something yet to be seen; and that the kingly sage laboured under a very erroneous impression, when he exclaimed

“There is nothing new under the sun.”

’Tis true, Tarshish, in Solomon’s day, was but a paltry type of Portsmouth or Plymouth, in ours: and his boasted ships were mere “jolly boats” to our “first rates.”—The error may therefore be venial in him; but fall not, curious friend, into the same mistake; but hie thee to Spithead or Plymouth Sound, the first time a pay-flag is seen flying at the mast-head of any of our ships of war: and, if not instructed by the wily sagacity displayed by the arch enemies of poor Christian sailors,—

“Duller should’st thou be than the fat weed,
That rots itself in ease on Lethe’s wharf,”

not to be highly amused at the simplicity and gullibility of their ill-fated customers—the sons of the ocean.

During the week previous to pay-day a wonderful revolution is observed to take place in as to the future—so there are certain indications the feelings and conduct of a large portion of his majesty's profit-loving lieges—bearded and beardless. The fair residents of the place assume a gentleness of manner and a decorous propriety altogether inconsistent with the usual attributes of this class of the softer sex. A kind and *affectionate* intercourse is observed to subsist between couples in every berth, and on every hatchway throughout the ship's decks.—The soft syren, who, on her first embarkation, through delicacy had 'never told her love,' or given other proof of affection to her swain, than those striking evidences of a pugnacious spirit, discernible in the scratched cheek or blackened eyes of her spouse, is now seen the live-long day sitting in amorous fondness with her rugged-muzzled swain on the fore bitts, or lolling on the combings of the hatchways, innocently twisting round her fingers those long love-locks, the cherished ornament of poor *Jack*, who believes her often-plighted oath, that—"he is the only man she ever *could* love."

Thus the war-worn son of ocean, simply wondering at the change, dissolves in dreams of love, and forgets all his toils, as Hercules did his labours, in the soft lap of a British Amazon.

Such are the celestial signs from whence it may be inferred that an important revolution in the posture of affairs is likely to take place.

But these portends are not confined to the fair afloat. Light breaks in from various quarters.—A tone of civility and kindness is assumed by persons previously strangers to both. The watermen are all on the alert. Not a bumboatwoman in the place neglects to make her way alongside the ship, and armed with a letter of introduction, or the more dangerous artillery of the eyes of a handsome young niece or daughter, who never fails, on such occasions, to accompany her, endeavours, with many a smirking contortion of face, to gain the officers' permission to attend the ship on the wished-for day.

But the most certain indications of the near approach of this most auspicious period are discernible from the

conduct and demeanour of the ancient people of Israel. This cunning tribe, with unerring certainty, are able to fix the date of the payment of any ship, through the medium of agents in London, or persons in public offices, into whose confidence they never fail to worm themselves. Indeed it may be said, that such is their sagacity, that they are in possession of this valuable, and to them important, secret, much earlier than the ship's commander, or any officer under him.

For about a week previously these equivocal indications of respect and civility from the Jewish tribe, had been witnessed by all the officers of the *Spitfire*. And here it is remarkable, that in proportion as these were heaped upon the brig's officers, those of the *Flora*, (the last ship paid,) and from whom, therefore, there was neither profit nor advantage to be expected, were treated with the utmost surliness and contemptuous indifference by these arch hypocrites; though formerly, in their turn, assailed by the same obsequiousness, artifice, and cajolery, as had been practised on Staunch and his officers.

'Two bells' of the forenoon watch had been struck, and Burton, now late with the 'report of guard,' was making his way from the 'admiral's hard,' to the office, when he was interrupted in his progress by a shoal of these sharks, who fawningly addressed him, and

"Bending low, and in a bondsman's key,"

solicited his permission to be allowed to come on board, the day next but one; the first positive intimation, by-the-by, which he had heard that the ship was then to be paid.

The applicants were so numerous, and yet the forms of application so similar, that a specimen or two would almost suffice for the whole tribe.

"Cot bless you, Captainsh," said a rabbi, of the first class,—and here, let it be observed, that, on this auspicious occasion, as well as on the accession of a new monarch to the throne, a very general promotion takes place, throughout the navy—particularly among the lieutenants, who are all dubbed captains.—"Cot bless you, Captainsh,—it dosh my heartsh cood to she you—Phatch can I do for you to sherve you or shave you expenshe?"

"Nothing, my good man," said Burton, whose hurry induced him to be peremptory, in declining this questionable civility. He had little reason to congratulate himself upon his success in shaking off this obsequious follower,—another more eager than his fellow thrust the card of his shop into his hand, and begged permission to be allowed to serve the ship's company with slops.

Endeavouring to clear Scylla, he tumbled into Charybdes ; for a bolder specimen of the tribe, seizing him by the arm, with marked anxiety, also presented his card, swearing—"Sho elp, my Cotsh, I av it in my poursh to sharve the shemen, full shixty pur shent. sheeper till any von elsh in de drade."

"Exshept me," said a fourth, whose card was as ready as his contradiction,—“I always sharves dis shentle'm. Don't I, mahuns ke poora ?”

"Damn your hunts ; don't hunt me ; I'm too busy to jabber Hebrew to you," said the lieutenant, who, in endeavouring to disengage himself from the enemy on the right, was assailed by a solicitation of a more insidious nature from a portly rich Israelite, who, eying his tarnished epaulette, imagined he had a suitable bait in reserve ; and catching him by the collar of the coat, whispered, in a tone of more seductive softness than is usually the attribute of his nation :—

"Letsh me makesh you a preshent of an epeletsh.—I've cot such a nische on—"T will fit you to a hairsh—veersteans du ma hunts ?"

Assailed as Burton's virtue was on all hands, the reader will perhaps sympathize with him in the feeling which prompted him, when at length liberated, to exclaim—the Lord be praised !

When the mere preparations for pay-day were in themselves so formidable, the reader will only think it a proof of becoming modesty in us to decline that which must be a very inadequate attempt to depict the turmoil, bustle, and uproar which characterized the proceedings of the day antecedent to the *Spitfire's* going to sea ; or, what would be still more difficult, the passions and prejudices, on the one hand, and utter want of principle or decorum, on the other, elicited during this conflict of interests. Suffice it

to say, that Burton found the prophecy of the sapient Israelite fulfilled. On the day mentioned, the pay-flag was hoisted—the commissioners came on board—the seamen's accounts were overhauled and adjusted. The debtors, both male and female, crowded the deck, which presented a scene like an eastern bazaar—the spaces between the guns being occupied as “stands” by the different firms of Moses,—Levi,—Jones,—Aaron,—Mordcai,—and Solomons, the remnants of their outcast tribes ;—and the refuse of ages.

Until sunset of that day, this marine fair was kept up with surprising spirit, despite of the constant interruptions occasioned by the shoals of Jews and Jewesses, who were not included in the permission to come on board, attempting to force their way through the port-holes, or carry her deck by storm. The “young gentlemen” of the ship having fatigued themselves to surfeit, in administering scalding hot pea-soup to their Jewish invaders by means of the ship's fire engine, or heaving wads, and sometimes cold shot, into the boats that came perforce along-side. Nor was it until the Jacks had got rid of almost all their paper, and the Jews of their “*slops*,” in which, strange to say, is always included a large quantity of ardent spirits, that “our peoplish” collected their effects, and returned on shore to calculate their profits. The ladies, too, “rigged out” in finery, highly creditable to the taste of their lovers (the substantial pledges of that constancy which these turtles had reciprocally sworn to each other), after whining, blubbering, and hugging, in proportion to the pin-money, or the liberal provision made for present and future wants by their indulgent spouses ; sobbed *affectionate* adieus, and were seen retiring in the boats—“waving their lily hands ;” while a few others, disappointed in their extravagant expectations, forgot their plighted love in their wrongs ; and very significantly immersed their digits in the sea, and devoutly thanked heaven—they had “well washed their hands of the shabby concern.”

Though it may be fairly inferred that irregularity and inebriety were among the consequences of a scene like this, by day-break next morning, the utmost order and

propriety were observable in every department on board: and before "piping to breakfast," the *Spitfire* was discovered, under a heavy press of canvass, stretching down Channel with a favourable breeze.

CHAPTER XX.

DEVOUT LOVERS.

And then there are such things as love-divine,
Bright and immaculate, unmixed and pure,
Such as the angels think so very fine;
And matrons, who would be no less secure,
Platonic, perfect. BYRON.

CRANK no sooner found himself able to navigate his ship about Cheltenham, as he termed the wheel-chair, than he employed himself, jointly with Tiller, to procure for his family a house, in which he might be his own master, and less exposed to the intrusion of strangers. The environs of this delightful place abound with small detached villas and rural boxes, amid gardens and plantations; which, to suit the convenience of the ever-changing population of the place, are let or hired, ready furnished. He was not long in obtaining the accommodation he required; and having discharged the enormous bill contracted during their stay at the inn, his coxswain received orders to shift his flag to Clarence Lodge; with which the latter very gladly complied, being almost as tired of running up and down stairs at his time of life, as his superior was of the noise and bustle of an hotel. Here, too, Mrs. Crank's genius was more at liberty to display itself; and she soon found herself, as most persons will, who can afford to entertain their friends, surrounded by a considerable party, or knot of persons, whose habits of thinking and acting were more congenial to her taste, than to that of the fastidious commodore. Among those, whose morn-

ing calls or attendance at her serious *soirées* were most frequent, was a preacher of some celebrity in the neighbourhood—at the foot of whose pulpit she almost every evening sat, to examine his doctrine, or profit by his precepts.

He was a man by no means in extremes, and corporeally, mentally, and in his circumstances, was destined to feel the full value of the happy mean. In age he was about five-and-forty—and while others, at this period of life, generally put on flesh, he, whether from personal mortification (though such is not, happily, the practice with divines since our separation from the Church of Rome), or from severe application to study, and the duties of his station, exhibited no inclination to obesity of figure.

It has already been observed, that Mrs. Crank, though verging into the wane of life, was still possessed of many attractions, more particularly in the eyes of a man, who, as regarded society, might be said to have “sprung from the ranks.” It may be safely affirmed, that the attentions of men in a more exalted rank are proportionably agreeable to women; by a pardonable analogous reasoning, it may be also inferred, they must be influenced by the deference or homage of men in dignified station. The poet saith—“A saint in crape is twice a saint in lawn.” To this feeling, therefore, may perhaps be traced the effect produced by the deferential preference and marked homage of the eye, which this sanctified personage knew so well how to launch with effect at a particular individual in his congregation, from the elevated station he filled in the execution of his high calling. His address consisted in pointing these attentions with so much delicacy and caution, that they were scarcely detectable by indifferent persons, and only revealed by imperceptible degrees to the fair victim intended to be fascinated by the bland persuasion of his oratory, and the mute eloquence of his eye.

As the preacher possessed a considerable share of both these powerful engines of influence, he became soon so great a favourite, through the joint influence of his harangue and his obsequiousness, that he had established himself rapidly on a footing of familiarity and confidence

at Clarence Lodge, with all save the veteran and his co-swain, from which he already augured the most favourable results. Nor must it be concealed in candour, that the fair one, though not of the tenderest age, nor of a disposition the most susceptible of soft impressions, could not but acknowledge to herself, that, whether from his doctrinal purity as a minister, or from his prepossessing qualities as a man, he was fast gaining on her good opinion; if not likely to supplant very soon the only person who, for the present, could be considered to stand in his way.

The reader will not be surprised to find that, in this instance, as in others of a similar nature, 'things went on swimmingly,' and that Doctor Styles, while ruminating in secret, or canvassing with himself, the pure principles of platonism, was already up to the ears in love; and almost drowned ere he could persuade himself he was out of his depth. But here the reverend (for these people have the arrogance to usurp that title) Doctor, it appeared, ventured to found the structure of his hopes upon a foundation too frail to resist the effect of coming in collision with so strong a mind as that of Mrs. Crank. She viewed this non-descript passion in a very different light from that in which her *reverend* friend could fain have represented it. She considered platonic affection as a *trap* for the young and unwary. The dangers to be apprehended from an indulgence in a feeling so romantic were occasionally the theme of her powers of description; and she had often closed the pretty mouth of many a fond fair one in a female coterie, by an observation, in which her terror of the passion was condensed in the form of an instructive apothegm—namely, that she suspected this insubstantial airy nothing, called platonic love, was too often the parent of substantial platonic children.

With a degree of tact, which showed him to be initiated in the *arcana* of human nature, and the sinuosities of sentiment, the reverend gentleman changed his ground, and assailed her by abject flattery, and the most unequivocal expression of preference. He often contrived to turn their discourse on the solid satisfaction and purer happiness which religious couples must derive from a union to which they were prompted by other and higher motives

than those which actuated mere "outer-court worshippers," as he chose to denominate those who did not conform to the exclusively-saving principles he professed.

Attacked at every salient angle, the female fortification insensibly began to testify the besieger's power; the out-works were carried in succession; and although there was no probability of a surrender at discretion, the wily assailant had already calculated with himself the terms of capitulation.

CHAPTER XXI.

AMATIVENESS.

But, oh, the curse of wishing to be great;
Dazzled with hope, we cannot see the cheat.
JUVENAL.

A modest hope—but modesty's my forte.
BYRON.

THE reverse of the sailor's adage, "after a storm comes a calm," is equally true as the adage itself. Every thing had hitherto succeeded so precisely according to Mrs. Crank's wishes, that she became not only reconciled to the journey, but even pleased with the consequences which had arisen out of it. Her quiet, however, was destined to be invaded from a quarter she little expected—her bosom friend—if thus may be designated the person to whom we, in our embarrassment, unbosom ourselves.

The reader is not to imagine the Dartmouth apothecary confined his practice solely to his country patients, or the professional drudgery of braying drugs in a mortar; and may have already perceived that Senna had calculated well with himself the value of a matrimonial connexion with the matron, and determined to obtain her hand; but here it would seem he had reckoned without his host. Since that lady had remarked to a "band-sister," who

had ventured to prophesy the probability of their union, that the doctor had mis-read that well-known injunction — “to set his affections on things above;” and placed them on things above *him*: a mis-quotation which did not fail to elicit a gentle rebuke from her “soul’s companion,” who condemned this allusion, as an instance of the levity into which even well regulated minds were naturally betrayed when involved in considerations of “*creature love*.”

This saintly scruple was parried by an assurance, which will readily be accredited by those who have perused the sketch before given of Mrs. Crank’s character, “that she never permitted any such earthly feeling to interpose between, or obscure her view of the greater and more important ends of her being.”

Of all this, however, Senna was ignorant. Ever since the altercation which is detailed in the chapter, entitled “Secret Services,” where the doctor, as an equivalent for his concession and acquiescence, in the banishment of Crank from his home, obtained a promise from the lady of the most “*ample remuneration*,” that gentleman devoted his days, and a portion of his nightly meditations to deliberating on the means he possessed to ensure the fulfilment of a pledge which, though so solemnly given, was still so ill defined.

To have been more intelligible, would not have suited the lady’s purpose: yet, without his co-operation, her project was almost impracticable. It will be recollected, that she, therefore, in order to secure the doctor in her interests, displayed on that occasion, in addition to the capacity which she always possessed for the management of intricate matters, the address of a consummate actress; and that while Senna endeavoured to extract a more explicit promise as to the manner in which he was to be remunerated, she had parried his urgency by her affected confusion, and by expressing, in a simpering, soft voice, “her surprise at his not perceiving that, circumstanced as she was, *delicacy* must prevent her being more explicit.”

How credulous is man! How easily gulled into believing that which our nature or our interests prompts us to believe! On this shifting sand, had the shrewd apo-

the cary raised the ponderous edifice of his future fortunes ; for, however lightly others may estimate them, the fortunes of the humblest must be deeply interesting to himself ; and the dexterity of his female adversary had foiled him in attempting to snatch from her, while in that embarrassing situation, a substantial promise of her hand in marriage, and by assailing his vanity, had fed his hopes with a shadow.

As has been said of a gift, there is more in the manner of bestowing it, than in the value of the thing itself ; so, as the promise here was rather implied than expressed, and might be either explained away or revoked, its value, in this instance, depended entirely on the artifice and inuendo which accompanied it.

Notwithstanding all his self-love, the more he pondered upon his situation, the more reason had he to dread, that he should be overmatched by his proud enslaver. Resolving, therefore, to call in the aid of others, he, like any other pedant, (in order to extricate himself from his embarrassment,) had recourse to study : as if women, like the arts and sciences, were to be learned by books. Here again, albeit not eminently entitled to be classed with the *litterati*, he felt an embarrassment, which none can so justly appreciate as the truly learned. The wisest man of the East, where Wisdom herself, 'tis said, was born, has observed, "in the multitude of counsellors, there wanteth not folly," and the doctor was a man who, from his egotistical habits, was very likely to fall into the same train of thinking ; for having turned over the pages of the "POLITE LETTER-WRITER," and the "UNIVERSAL," he found no precedent which at all embraced the features of his case. *They* were certainly peculiar ; even *he* had too much taste not to turn with disgust from those stiff-starched samples of amatory correspondence under the title of "*Letters of a Young Gentleman to a Young Lady on their approaching Nuptials.*" Besides, neither he nor his mistress were comprised within the definitions. That from a "middle aged widower" to a "young widow" was equally inapplicable, Senna never having been a "Benedic." He had recourse to a novel not long published, entitled "*Religious Courtship,*"—there he found a letter, but it was in

so glowing a style, and savoured so much of the Canticles, that he might as well have taken up "Ovid's Art of Love," had he not known that should his plagiarism be detected, the circumstance of Ovid's being a heathen would prove fatal to his own interests with Mrs. Crank. A production of a purer school was resorted to; but even the saintly models in "CŒLEBS IN SEARCH OF A WIFE," furnished no parallel in the present case. Two mornings had thus been fruitlessly wasted in *research*: on the third, in attending a young lady far advanced in a decline, and observing "Rousseau's Eloisa" lying on the table, of which he knew no more than that it was a *love-book*, he begged to borrow it, remarking privately to her mother, with a nod of sapience, "that such works were eminently calculated to increase irritability in a mind so sentimental, and consequently accelerate the circulation of the blood in a frame so delicate."

The volumes were abstracted, and to work he went.

If he despaired of availing himself of the former authorities, the subtle, though tender; metaphysical, though captivating style, of this wizard of human passion, was in his mind perfectly inapplicable. Eloisa and Clara were beings of another world—sublimated creatures of high-wrought fancy. Mrs. Crank, though a saint, a woman of this world. Out of the three thickly printed volumes, he contented himself with gleaning an epithet from each; of which, it will be perceived, he in his letter afterwards made a very judicious use. Between "my charming friend—Eloisa! thou most adorable object"—and—"dear partner of my soul—" his bewildered judgment faltered and hesitated, so long, that, as they lay before him, transcribed on pieces of paper, he at length determined that chance should decide his choice; and closing his eyes, made a circuit thrice with his hand, and completed the magic rite, by luckily pricking his pen on the first. Baffled in procuring for himself a perfect model on which to construct the bark of all his matrimonial hopes, he sat down, taking care to exclude any possible interruption on the part of young Rufus, by locking the door; and flattering himself that he felt in a generous glow of mind, adapted to a Cytherean composition, he commenced pen-

ning, and finally signed, sealed, and delivered for post, the following draught, which, like many others, he had professionally prepared for his favourite patient, he endeavoured to render palatable to her taste, by adding *quantum suff.* of that saccharine material—flattery.

In consequence of having filled the sheet of paper to repletion, it will be perceived the doctor's letter commenced singularly enough, thus—

“ P. S. Private and altogether confidential.

“ Dartmouth, December 6th, 18—.

“ My charming, and give me leave to add, most interesting friend. I had flattered myself, that ere now, I should have been favoured with, to me, the gratifying intelligence of your safe arrival ; likewise by the assurance, that all symptoms of *that* complaint, or rather, let me call it, disease, whose consequences and effects you had so much reason to apprehend, had been, if not completely subdued, so far abated, as to leave little reason to dread a relapse.

“ The object so much desired might, perhaps, after the removal of contagious material, have been accomplished without leaving Camperdown ; but consistency on your part as well as on my own, was at stake, and I therefore regretted we should ever have taken different views of the subject. When I had, as you, my charming friend, are aware, already conceded many scruples, some grains of indulgence was due to my anxiety to preserve professional character. Nor was I selfish in that anxiety, for as I am encouraged to hope—I approach the subject with a diffidence becoming the delicacy of the case—My languid pulse proclaims it—a *look* would explain all—But why conceal it—’Tis due to us both to be brief—therefore I say, I am encouraged to *hope*—(I never till now knew the value of *that* word)—yes, to hope, that one day, and that—dare I anticipate reciprocity in the wish ?—may not be far distant—But, oh, words ! words !—how inadequate is language to express a *desire*, not more delicately entertained than ardently felt—yes, those only who have suffered them, can tell the unhappy moments of hesitative

uncertainty, which attend the formation of a resolution to declare the sentiments of affection.

"Have I not always devoted myself to your wishes?—and though I have, therefore, made considerable sacrifices, they are of no value in the account, when set off against the sum total of happiness yet in store for him, who, while he acknowledges himself unworthy of so great an honour, yet aspires to nothing less than your plighted hand, and your charming person.

"I have, on this subject, thought much: thoroughly analyzed every feeling—dissected my heart; for, let me not disguise through false delicacy, that ever since *your pledge*, I have looked upon you as my better half—nay, the dear partner of my soul. In these anxious deliberations, my adored friend will find, I have consulted *her* interests more than my own.

"You are aware how ill it would consort with my reputation, professionally, to absent myself for any length of time from the shop my practice here. I am, however, disposed to concede in this instance, as well from notions of delicacy, as to show you how much I consult your wishes on all occasions—and shall propose, in order to avoid all the inconvenient bustle of preparation, and impertinent curiosity of strangers and others on the subject of our approaching nuptials, if once they were announced in the neighbourhood as fixed, that as you are now at Cheltenham, this important matter might be concluded both with greater propriety, convenience, and, let me add, privacy *there*, than at our own residence, by my running over to you a couple of days, for I fear, however ardent my desire to prolong my stay, the calls of a female patient far gone, and by whom I am retained, will preclude the possibility of my extending my visit longer than to consummate my happiness, and merge in the dear privileges of a husband, all those delicate feelings of friendship which have so long subsisted between you and

"Your devoted,

"SAMUEL SENNA.

"N. B. Having obtained a frank for the day from my kind friend the member for Totness, and being barely in

time for the post, I trust you will excuse the hurried and slovenly style of my communication ; but where feeling is correct, form may be dispensed with."

The irritation which the receipt of this extraordinary effusion occasioned in the lady's mind may be easily conceived by the reader, who is already aware of the haughty character the doctor had to deal with. The dose was so far from being palatable, that she flung the letter in the fire, and determined, as the best way to show her contempt for its author, not to condescend a reply.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE CHASE.

"A ship in sight!" with joy the tars make sail,
And spread the belling canvass to the gale.

MOORE:

Love and glory are known to go hand in hand: and even our engrossing predilections for female society must not be suffered to divest us of all anxiety for the fate or fortunes of our friends afloat.

Some days had elapsed after the departure of Staunch's new vessel from Plymouth Sound, to take up her station off the port of Bourdeaux, ere any thing occurred worthy of particular notice. On the morning of the day alluded to, there had been a good deal of sea running, and, for this precise reason, the captain had, contrary to the general custom of the service, selected this opportunity for exercising the ship's company at the great guns, so as to inure them to the difficulties of this service under such circumstances. During the time the people were at dinner, which on board well regulated ships of war, occupies an hour and a half, Staunch was absent from deck. The fair reader will perhaps be inquisitive to learn how the gallant commander of the brig was just now occupied.

Considering the sharp appetite which the keen sea air imparts, they will not be surprised to hear that he sat alone musing deeply, and ever and anon devouring Bacon, which lay invitingly on the table before him. Not that our fair friends are to understand that he was churlishly pampering his mortal part with a tit bit of that swine's flesh, whose relish is so agreeable even to themselves, when placed on the breakfast-table in the form of ham. No—his was a regale of the mind: and he was depasting his immortal part with a slice of intellectual food from that Bacon, whose quaint essays have laid down, with admirable perspicuity, and with the happiest illustration, the great and original land-marks of true practical philosophy.

It is to be remarked, that every man is more or less professional in his reading; and thus it happened in the present instance, that although Lord Bacon was an equity lawyer of great knowledge and ability, for which reasons he might be supposed never by accident to have dropped any thing in his writings encouraging the practice of invading, and possessing *vi et armis*, the property of others, Staunch was agreeably surprised, in the midst of his reverie, by meeting with the following passage, which he thought peculiarly applicable to his own situation and pursuits in life. He now, for the second time, read aloud the extract—

“It cannot be denied, but outward accidents conduce much to fortune, but chiefly the mould of a man's fortune is in his own hands—*Faber quisque fortunæ suæ*: therefore, if a man look sharply and attentively, he shall see fortune; for though she be blind, yet she is not invisible.”

“Well!” exclaimed Staunch, “since ever I embraced the profession, that has been my own opinion. And, now that I find that I am backed in it by so great an authority, I'll shape my course according to his chart; and my whole study shall be to conquer fortune. In no instance, or under no circumstances, will I relax my exertion, but like the falcon, whose eye never shrinks, whose wing never tires the live-long day, or the forest king who wakes throughout the night to surprise his slumbering prey, I'll weary out the reluctant goddess by assiduity and

perseverance until she fulfils my wish, and crowns my endeavours to success."

So spoke Staunch ; fully resolved to be as good as his word, without taking it into consideration, that resolutions of this kind were frequently as futile, as predictions respecting the weather : and that often the blindest buzzards in the service have been more favoured by fortune in acquiring prize money, than the most expert professors of piratical warfare.

It had been always his practice, when cruising, to keep the *Spitfire*, and other vessels he had previously commanded, under as low sail as possibly convenient. To this precaution he was prompted by having observed, that the lofty canvass invariably carried by American merchantmen, when availing themselves of a favourable wind, placed them under the disadvantage of being discerned by him, at a much greater distance than he could have been descried by them, in consequence of adopting this caution.

Under this sort of depressed sail, when about sixty miles off the port of Bourdeaux, the wind blowing rather fresh from the westward, Staunch was summoned from his studies below, by a welcome intimation from the mast-head, that a strange sail was seen on the lee-bow.

"Point to her," said the officer of the watch, placing his glass on the binnacle-head, as he brought the former to bear in a line with the man's hand, who now stood out from the lee-cross-trees, like a human finger-post, with one arm extended in the direction of the stranger—

"That 's about two points on the bow," cried the master, flying down the after ladder to inform the captain, whom he found already on his way up, to ascertain the character of the stranger—the 'youngster of the watch,' having been previously directed to 'way aloft,' to see what she looked like, and which way she was standing.'

Anticipating the captain's intentions, the boatswain stood chirruping his call between his lips, anxiously awaiting the master's re-appearance on deck. Stowell's head was hardly above the combings of the hatchway, ere he motioned to Brace, who first giving a shrill blast of his

call, and applying his left hand to his ear, as if to deaden his own astounding tones, bellowed, like Stentor of old—

“Hands, make sail.”

The seamen were seen flying up the hatchway and ascending the rigging, with that cheerful alacrity, which the exhilarating cry of “a strange sail” invariably inspires in the crew of a vigilant cruiser.

“Let two reefs out of the taup’sles, Mr. Hasty,” cried the commander, “and loose the to’ gallant sails; but don’t let them fall, till we ascertain which way the stranger’s standing.”

Having carried into effect the captain’s orders, Hasty hailed the ‘youngster’ at the mast-head, who, despite of the lurching and pitching of the brig, had placed himself in such a position at the fore-top-mast cross-tree as enabled him to bring his glass to bear upon the stranger.

“She’s a square-rigg’d vessel, close-hauled on the other tack!” shouted the youngster, who added, with emphasis—“and her sails, Sir, are of very *white* canvass.”

“Keep fast to’ gallant sails,” cried the captain—“she’ll not bear them on a wind—brigs were not built to sail on their broadsides—up with the top-sails—haul aboard the fore and main-tacks—set the jib half-boom in. Keep your luff, quartermaster; but let her go through the water withall: or the fellow will weather us.”

The sails were soon set and trimmed; and from the manner in which the *Spitfire* heeled over to the pressure of the breeze on her canvass, it was manifest to all, that the captain had rightly anticipated her inability to carry her top-gallant sails. The fore-castle, which, but a few minutes before, had been a scene of such bustle and activity, was now, from the spray fast sheeting over the bows of the vessel, deserted by all, save the seaman who ‘stood by the jib-sheet,’ and the boatswain who took upon himself to look out for the boom:—a favourite stick of his; which he always asserted would “stand as long as the Monument, providing she was properly handled.”

The rapid succession of seas deterred not our old friend Brace, from maintaining the post he had imposed upon himself; who, like a dog coming out of the water, shook

off every minute the foaming spray, good humouredly observing—

“That a good-un was never yet known to be a dry-un.”

A heavy sea striking the brig on the beam, Staunch exclaimed, in an angry tone, to the steersman,—“This is all owing to *your* steerage, Sir!—Where the devil is the fellow flying to, off the wind!—Luff, Sir, luff. Mr. Hasty! send another helmsman aft. Send Toggle to the wheel.”

Just as the captain had called for his favourite helmsman, Burton, who had previously gone aloft with a glass to ascertain whether the suspicions of the youngster were correct with respect to the chase, ‘sung out—’

“’Pon deck there! the chase has bore round-up, and appears to be bringing the wind on his starboard quarter.”

“The devil she has,” exclaimed Staunch, with a smile. “She’s a rogue, then—overshot her port, I suppose; and perceiving us in chase of her, she’s going to hard-up for the nearest under her lee. Starboard your helm, Toggle,” continued the captain, addressing the last-mentioned seaman, who had now taken hold of the wheel—“Bring the chase right a-head by the bearing; and keep her so, till we see what course she means to shape. Starboard yet.”

“Starboard it is, Sir,” echoed the steersman. “She carries a taut weather-helm, Sir—Her rudder’s hanging all across her stern-post—Bad as a butt o’ water towing overboard!—You must take something out o’ the eyes of her,” continued the helmsman, with a significant nod of the head, as if he felt himself the only privileged person on board to offer an authoritative opinion upon the vessel’s trim. “She’s too much by the head, Sir!”

“Oh, if that be the case,” said the captain, “we had better run the two bow-chasers aft; as, I dare say, the fellow will run us a devil of a dance; and we shan’t want them for a while.”

“Why, yes, Sir,” said Toggle, “she’d be all the better for it—and, moreover, Sir, if you were to pipe the hammocks down, and let the watch below turn-in with a two-and-thirty pound shot for a bed-fellow, she’d go along far more lovin’er!”

As soon as the bow-chasers had been transported aft; the shot-boxes removed from the fore to the centre part of the vessel; and each man belonging to the watch below embracing a cold shot, as he swung in his hammock with the send of the ship; our modern *Palinurus*, proud of the implicit obedience paid to his suggestions, exclaimed aloud:—

“That ’ll do, Sir. I feel her tremble—she now behaves like a lady. Trace up a little o’ the tack o’ the boom-mainsail, and she ’ll steer herself.”

A stern chase, in particular, appears always to the party in pursuit the most anxious and tedious. The sun had already sunk in the horizon ere the *Spitfire* had raised the hull of the stranger from the deck; but the former had been fortunately favoured, during the short interval of twilight, by a fast succession of several heavy squalls, of which Staunch dauntlessly made the most, by carrying his canvass “through all, and not starting a stitch.”

As the night approached, the anxiety of the pursuers increased. The “idlers” reappeared upon deck, and became, to the annoyance of the executive officers, troublesomely inquisitive.

“How long shall we have the moon?” said the surgeon, addressing the master, who at that moment was more solicitous about “setting up a quarter backstay,” and securing the main-topmast from the effects of the last heavy squall, than in making any calculation as to the value of “a mouthful of moonshine.”

“Don’t you think she ’ll double us in the dark?” said the purser, putting this interrogatory by way of consolation, to the first lieutenant, who was standing at the capstan adjusting his night-glass, preparatory to bringing it to bear upon the chase—“I’ve known these Yankees, before now, suddenly shorten all sail, and let the chaser pass them unperceived.”

“Aye!” said Hasty, “I was in hopes, the last squall would have sickened you from again showing *your* nose, Mister Nip, upon deck—but now since you’ve popped up again, I fear the game’s all up. You’re just like a porpoise—your appearance is always portentous of bad weather, or worse luck.”

Burton, alone, was exempt from participating in this, and other similarly complimentary colloquies upon deck, during the last five or six hours of the chase. Long before the shades of night had deprived him of the power of keeping in sight, with the naked eye, that object which had excited so many speculative opinions, and such an alternation of doubt and hope; the ever vigilant lieutenant had taken up his station on the fore-yard, until now, nearly midnight, when the chase was considered to be within gun-shot.

As the *Spitfire* approached the stranger, the latter began to yaw, and steer unsteadily, plainly indicating the helmsman's nervous anticipation of a visit from one of those winged messengers of fate,—vulgarly yclept, a round-shot.

"We had better give him a gun, Sir," said Hasty, "and knock away some of his sticks.—If we don't come up with him before day-light, we shall have some other cruiser heaving in sight, and coming in for snacks."

"No bad suggestion, by-the-by," said Staunch; "leave a Yorkshireman alone, for taking care of number one."

"Oh Sir," said Burton, who had just descended upon deck—"we shall be alongside of him in less than half-an-hour; and then should he not heave-to, we can easily unreeve his running-rigging with our musketry. You never can depend upon a bow-chaser on a dark night; and 'twould be a pity to do the poor devil a mischief."

As Burton had predicted, a short half-hour (by again 'carrying-on,' through a very heavy squall) brought the *Spitfire* close up in the wake of the chase. Though yawing from his course, and continuing unsteady in his steerage, some ten or twelve minutes had yet elapsed, ere a sharp fire of musketry, kept up from the *Spitfire's* forecastle, compelled the stranger to indicate a disposition to comply with the cruiser's summons. A ~~man~~ was shown over the stern, but nothing short of 'rounding to,' and heaving her main-topsail to the mast, could satisfy a man of Staunch's caution and experience. The utmost confusion prevailed on the fugitive's deck. In fact, the captain and crew were at issue as to the propriety of immediate surrender.

"I guess," said the former, who was also a part owner, "it's no pretty considerable trifle that ought to induce us to sacrifice such a valuable cargo."

"Curse the cargo," said the spokesman of the crew, who was no stranger at Portsmouth Point, though now a naturalized American citizen—"I *guess* it's no pretty considerable trifle to lose a limb or a life. Who'll pension a fellar, if he loses a flipper? Who'll protect his wife and family, and save 'em from starving, if he's knocked off the hook in protectin' his owner's property? If you're all o' my way o' thinking, I *guess* you'll bundle below,"—and so saying he descended the ladder leading to the steerage, followed (with the exception of the mate, who kept his post at the helm,) by the remainder of the crew, who perfectly acquiesced in his arguments.

All further struggle, or trial of skill, was now deemed by the half frantic captain, to be totally fruitless. The *Spitfire's* musketry had already shot away his main-top-sail tie, and rendered that sail partly unserviceable. In vain he hailed again and again—"avast firing," but, in consequence of being to leeward of his pursuer, his voice was borne away in the blast, and lost in the uproar of the elements. But that which now added most to his perplexity, was his total inability to 'shorten sail,' and perform the necessary evolutions, preparatory to 'heaving-to,' without the assistance of his crew; who falling into the same opinion as Paddy, when Bonaparte's abdication was announced, that the poor emperor "had nothing else for it now but to *take to drink*"—were freely and copiously helping themselves to liquor below. Again, he entreated their co-operation—nothing could induce them to come on deck, or desert drink to dare danger.

At length reduced to the alternative, and regardless of the consequence of adopting so unseaman-like a measure, he seized hold of a hatchet, and cut away, not only the two remaining topsail haliards, but the very *sheets* themselves—singing out to the mate at the helm—"Hard a lee—hard a lee!"

The chase broached instantly to; her loosened sails flapping wildly in the wind, shaking the masts in their

very steps by their rebound, and alarming the ear by the astounding noise overhead.

Although prepared for this evolution, the *Spitfire* had barely time to 'round to,' keeping to windward of the chase. In a very few minutes a boat was lowered, and the stranger taken possession of, by a prize master and six hands.

She proved to be an American merchant ship, fully freighted with a very valuable cargo.

CHAPTER XV.

THE BATTLE.

All was prepared—the fire, the sword, the men,
To wield them in their terrible array.

BYRON.

THE prize had been but a few hours in the possession of the *Spitfire*, ere the naturalized citizen, and denaturalized seamen, who so obstinately refused to stop on deck as a target to be shot at, where resistance was impossible, found an opportunity of acquainting Staunch, that an American man-of-war brig, of nearly similar force, had been spoken with the preceding evening.

Although the crew of the *Spitfire* had received considerable excitement during the chase, the sensation produced by this intelligence, was of a far more anxious and animating character. A sharp look out was maintained throughout the night, and the precaution adopted of stowing the hammocks of the watch in the nettings, lest the enemy should surprise them in the dark.

As the second day dawned, to their great delight, the enemy (for such the colour of her canvass, and the extraordinary rake of her masts, with other minute circumstances, proclaimed the strange sail to be) was discovered on the weather-beam, her courses dipped be-

neath the horizon. Almost immediately after being discovered, she was observed to bear up in pursuit.

Those who have experienced the first sensations, created by the sound of the drummer's "beat to quarters," can easily imagine with what despatch the *Spitfires* bolted their breakfast. Busy preparations were making for battle in every part of the ship.

Having previously served in both frigate and battleship, no man was better aware than Staunch, or more impressed with the disadvantages, under which an officer fighting a flush-decked vessel, such as the *Spitfire*, must always labour, as compared with those in the command of the former classes. All ships are liable to the loss of their masts, and thereby becoming unmanageable. But though a three or two-decker, nay, even a frigate, by the falling of a mast fore-and-aft, or, in other words, in-board, may be so situated, as to have the whole of her upper-deck battery buried under the ruin of its wreck and rigging, still a spirited fire may be maintained from her lower tier of guns. Not so with such a vessel as our little favourite. A similar disaster would render all her artillery totally useless, and, if crippled by such an accident when to leeward, prevent her having recourse to boarding.

To counteract, in some measure, a disaster of this sort, 'salvagees,' and long 'luff-tackles' had been got upon deck, to supply the place of a shot-away shroud—spare spars, and lengths of junk,* were placed up and down, and woulded 'fish-fashion' round both lower masts, in order to render them less liable to damage from the enemy's shot. In this state of his preparations, the whole attention of the commander appeared to be directed to the reparation of injury, and devising remedies for its consequences under every possible unfortunate occurrence—a caution which, if acted on by others, may hereafter enable the naval historian to record its results in terms of triumph, instead of deploring the failure of enterprises, undertaken and executed in a

* Junk—old rope, but particularly old cables, cut up in lengths:

spirit of valour, which too generously disdains prudential motives.

The enemy was now within long gun-shot range, when finding himself closing with his antagonist, faster than he could possibly complete his preparations for battle, he took in his studding sails, and came to the wind on a parallel line with the *Spitfire*. In this position, he remained for some minutes, until perfectly prepared to commence the mortal, and, as he seemed to anticipate, murderous conflict.

His 'lower yards' were already slung in chains—his small sails sent down from aloft—his tops barricadoed with the largest of his lashed up hammocks, which, while concealing his riflemen from the adversary's view, afforded them admirable shelter from the effect of musketry.

• His deck presented a most warlike appearance, and in every way, all his preparations intimated that no possible precaution was wanting to ensure the triumph of his flag. Match tubs, rope grummets, or rings, encircling piles of round two-and-thirty pound shot, were placed apart out of sweep of the carronade slides. Muskets, pikes, pistols, and tomahawks innumerable were laid athwart upon the deck—besides bar, star, double headed shot, and boxes of grape and canister, several small barrels, and bags of langrage were conveniently laid along his line of battery.

As if to inspirit his men, appropriate names for each gun were painted in large letters above the ports: and here another instance was given of the boasted "march of intellect" in the Western world, and a liberalized contempt for ancient lore. Disdaining all allusion to classical names* of renown, or the charms of allegory,

* Notwithstanding the cry of the Liberals, with Mr. Cobbett at their head, that classical learning is not worth the pains of acquiring, and that Heathen Mythology is only calculated to delude and corrupt the mind, we rather feel disposed here to congratulate our national taste, if not to chuckle with laughter at the contrast which the names of our vessels of war present to those of the most highly talented nation of the New World. While their list contains only such names, as the *Chesapeake*, *United States*, *Constitution*, *President*, *Wasp*, *Franklin*, *Hornet*, which convey only the most common place allusions: ours, in adopting

which are so conspicuous in British nautical nomenclature, the American tars had christened them by names or deeds, with which, it may be presumed, from practice, they were most familiar, so that in looking at the upper part of their port-cells—the "Blazer," the "Sudden Death," the "Wilful Murder," "Old Nick," and "Bloody Ben," stared them full in the face.

Now thoroughly prepared to meet his opponent, he again bore up, steering straight for her quarter. At each mast head, a flag was seen flying, bearing a vaunting motto, and on his colours at the 'peak' the pride of country displayed itself amid a profuse galaxy of glittering stars.

The *Spitfire* was standing on the starboard tack, keeping about a point off the wind, under topsails, top-gallant sails, boom mainsail and jib. At her peak or gaff-end, the British blue ensign waved in the wind; and from each of her lower and topmast stays, the 'Union jack' of England was proudly displayed.

The British were already at their quarters, where their anxiety to pour out their fire on the foe, while approaching, was betrayed by the dumb show, significant gestures, and imploring glances of the captains of the guns, while catching the eye of their commander, as they looked alternately through the port-holes at the closing enemy, or along the sights of their guns. Nor could their cool gallantry fail to inspire him with a double confidence, when he observed some, actually chalking the initials of their names on their tell-tale shot, whose effect they appeared extremely impatient to try on the enemy while barely within carronade range. To this impatience, the only answer given consisted in a short roll of the drum, to obtain attention; accompanied by a wave of the commander's hand as he stood on the poop. Aware of the purport of this invitation, the men deserted their guns for a moment, and eagerly

the *Spartan*, the *Tiber*, *Euridice*, *Leonidas*, *Ajax*, *Calliope*, *Clio*, *Niobe*, *Naiad*, *Dryad*, and a hundred others, has associated with these floating guardians of our empire, ideas fraught with historical excitement, and exquisite poetical beauties.

crowded aft. Nothing could be more imposing, than the fearless eye, the high bearing, and efficient state of preparation of each, as he repaired to the quarter-deck, exhibiting in their weapons and light dress, from which every thing cumbersome had been discarded, a specimen of active force, which might well be contrasted with the heavily armed and hampered soldier in action. They had all been selected, as already mentioned, with that attention to height, muscular vigour and activity, which constitutes what in the service is termed 'picked men.' And though there were minute points of attire, wherein some differed from the rest, they were all bare-necked, bare-armed, having tucked up their shirt-sleeves to their shoulders, to prevent being incommoded on duty, and without either jacket or waistcoat. Instead of the latter article of dress, each had substituted as a support, during possibly long protracted exertion, a handkerchief tied extremely tight round the waist. Above this, a black leathern belt was buckled, sustaining the cutlass or sword peculiar to the sailor; for, contrary to the general practice, Staunch had trained all his men to the broadsword, so as to enable them to act as boarders. Superadded to this belt, the captains of the guns wore another, to which was affixed a small tube box, containing about twenty or thirty little funnels formed of paper, charged with powder, and terminating in a quill, to be inserted as priming in the touch-holes of the guns—thus preventing those serious accidents, too common from the explosion of the powder-horns by the flashes of each other's guns. The black silk kerchief was transferred from the neck, and now, bound round the head, restrained within its folds every straggling hair, not excepting even those *love-locks*, or long curls depending from the temples, which most youthful sailors cherish with no little vanity, as ornaments the most becoming in the eyes of the fair.

But here no place was left for the intrusion of the softer passions, and the stern call of honour swallowed up all recollections of home, of family, of past endearments. The bright future alone attracted the eye of valour: and Hope, the hero's ruling star, usurped the

sole dominion of the mind. Happy delusion of the brave!—Exquisite excitement of the ardent spirit! which, from its intensity, nor knows nor heeds the iron shower which shall sweep those proud decks,—the fell waste of destiny in its desolating course!

Their commander now hastened to address the ship's company, assembled on the quarter-deck.

"I perceive, my lads, your impatience to open your fire on the enemy—the effect of which, at such a distance, is not only extremely uncertain, but little calculated to impress our opponent with that opinion of our cool intrepidity, with which 't would be well to convince him. I have well weighed in my mind two ways in which he may probably attack us, and therefore, have called you together to apprize you of the mode I mean to meet either—and now, my lads, to these two points I require your serious attention."*

This intimation of his intention to his crew, was delivered in so expressive a tone, and excited such silent attention, that the drop of a pin might have been almost heard on the deck.

"Should the enemy attempt to run under our stern to rake us, we can easily, by wearing, avert his intention, come on the same parallel with himself, or grapple with him as opportunity may offer. For this reason, your lar-board, and now lee-guns must be depressed no lower than to the turn number ten on the screw,† and letter C on the ~~com~~,‡ because, in the event of his choosing this mode of attack, we shall meet him on an even keel."

Agreeably to these directions, and a particular order from Hasty, the captain of the after lee-carronade depressed this gun to the point required as a pattern, more fully to exemplify to the rest the commander's wish.

* It is very unusual in the service, for a commander to acquaint his ship's company of his plan of attack or defence. In one or two instances, however, it has been adopted, and its beneficial effects confirmed by the result.

† The elevating or depressing screw attached to carronades.

‡ A wedge used to raise the breech of cannon.

"But should our wary opponent waive this advantage—wish to keep the weather gage, and round to on our starboard quarter—you must on account of the ship's leaning over to lee-ward) 'double coin' and depress, and bring letters C and B to bear."

He paused again to permit the captain of the after weather carronade to carry his directions into effect.

"Done. Sir, done," cried his favourite marksman, upon placing the coins as desired.

"And now, my lads," resumed Staunch, "I must beg to draw your earnest attention to this *important* particular.—for much depends upon your following up that line of fire I wish you to adopt. should the enemy pursue the mode of attack I contemplate. In the first place, I must impress upon your mind, that I do not wish to reserve our broadside till the enemy gets fairly abeam; nor is it, in the next, a broadside together, I desire. But as soon as the enemy rounds to, which will probably be within short pistol shot on the weather quarter, and ranges up alongside, (and which, from the way we shall keep on the ship through the water, shall not be too rapid, I promise.) the captain of the after carronade will watch, with cool and deliberate aim, and fire right into the enemy's bow-port, the moment it appears on with the 'sight' of his gun. In the same manner the next after carronade is to be discharged into the enemy's third bow-port the moment it heaves in sight, and so on in succession. But, above *all* things, hurry not;—watch well the weather roll, and the heave of the sea: and bear this in mind, by thus firing your after-guns first, you don't intercept your view with your own smoke.

"I shall not say a word about throwing away shot in vain—*You* too well know their value,—and *I* 'm sure the *Spitfire's*," here he laid a marked emphasis on the name of his ship, "will never *fire* for sake o' the *flash*."

Jack, who at all times detests and despises a speech at the gangway,* has no objection to an opening oration on

* Preparatory to punishment.

going into action. To this cool, convincing, and unaffected address, conveyed in terms so well suited to the capacity of the tar, the crew were about to respond with a hearty cheer, when they were stopped by the captain's uplifted hand—

“One word, my lads—Do you all understand both modes of receiving the enemy?”

“All, Sir,—all,” simultaneously resounded from the assembled crew.

“Clearly?” added he.

“Well, Sir—well,” cried the excited tars.

“Mark, then—suspend your cheers till the sticks begin to tumble, my lads, on one side or other!—And now,—success to his Majesty's arms. I'll do *my* duty—I know *you*, to a man, will do yours.”

The crew, now dismissed, returned to their quarters with renewed confidence. Every minute occupied by the enemy in approaching, appeared to the sailor an hour.—This interval is, of all, that of most intense anxiety; since to many, the fleeting, awful interval between two worlds—the fond past, the dread present, intrude in rapid succession unbidden on all; the brave sailors, the not more brave, though more ambitious and reflective superior. This intrusion is again and again chased away by the rude joke and bold boasts of a few reckless spirits, who seem to vie with each other in daring danger, and braving the fast gathering storm of fate. But once in the thick of action, adieu to thought:—Time itself is unmarked—even fear resigns its umpire o'er the mind. Grim death conceals his treacherous approach behind the effulgent brightness of glory's golden wings, and shrouds securely his terrors in the shout of battle, and the cannon's roar.

As Staunch had partly conjectured, the movements of his adversary manifestly indicated an intention to maintain the weather-gage. He was within long musket shot, when, perceiving the enemy bracing up his after yards, preparatory to rounding to on the same parallel with the *Spitfire*, he exclaimed,—“Come—that's manly enough; I see he means to fight us fairly, and not throw away his time in manœuvring.”

“Ah, Sir,” said Hasty, “there's nothing like trusting to the bull-dogs.”

"Right, Hasty, right," said the captain, descending from the poop, and now for the last time, cautioning his men to be cool, and to adhere strictly to his directions, relative to discharging their guns in succession.

The antagonists were now about a long cable's length apart. A solemn and death like silence pervaded both brigs; nothing was heard save the murmuring surge, or wash of waters, breaking under the bows of the advancing bark which fell upon the ear of the British, like the distant sound of a heavy surf.

"Stand by abaft," said Staunch, in a purposely suppressed tone, lest the word of command should apprize the enemy of what they were to expect, as the latter now 'luffed up' on his quarter.

The words had hardly escaped his lips ere, as had been pre-concerted, the *Spitfire's* guns, beginning abaft, were coolly fired in succession, into the enemy's ports. The effect produced by this deliberate and deadly discharge, appeared for some moments to paralyze the efforts of the foe. Almost all the captains of his guns, anxiously waiting with the lanyards* of their gun-locks in their hands, for the word to fire, were felled by these well directed shots. What would Staunch have now given, had his position afforded him the opportunity to have followed up the blow with the sword. Half a minute had nearly elapsed, ere the enemy returned a broadside, and which, as respected the number slain and wounded, proved partly ineffectual, from having previously to 'hauling to the wind,' erroneously calculated on the ship's leaning more over to leeward, and consequently not sufficiently depressing her guns. The *Spitfire's* sails and rigging suffered materially. They were literally riddled, and cut into shreds—for beside a round-shot in each, the enemy had loaded his guns with old copper bolts, bits of broken bars, rusty nails, and other destructive langrage.

The injury thus sustained by the *Spitfire's* sails, occasioned her to drop to leeward and also astern, upon her opponent's quarter. The American attempted to cross

* A line attached to the lock of a cannon, which answers the purpose of a trigger.

her ahead, and rake her, but the quick-sighted Staunch anticipating the movement, foiled the attempt by putting up his helm.

The American captain now clearly saw there was little advantage to be reaped by any trial of tactical skill with his wary antagonist. On this subject, however, a difference of opinion appeared to subsist between him and his officers. The senior lieutenant and master thought otherwise; but the advantages accruing from the possession of the 'weather gage,' were too apparent, and too highly appreciated by their cautious superior, to risk its loss by speculating on a perhaps fruitless manœuvre.

He knew, from experience, every thing depended upon dismasting his opponent. With this view, previously loading his guns with both round and double-headed shot, he threw his main-topsail aback, so as to permit his adversary drawing up abreast on his beam. Receiving the *Spitfire's* fire, he reserved his own for a closer and deadlier struggle, allowing her to pass on his bow. When now on her quarter, he edged away in a lateral direction, till again brought fairly abreast. within half pistol shot, and now, with the hope of feeling his adversary's masts, at which his whole lee-battery was directed, he discharged his intended annihilating broadside, which, by good fortune, only cut through a few of her fore and main shrouds, and shattered her boats on the booms. Though evidently annoyed by the discomfiture of this well-meant attempt to cripple his enemy, whose masts, to his extreme mortification, were all seen standing and unhurt, his confidence was by no means abated.

Both brigs, at a few fathoms apart, were running off the wind on a parallel line, maintaining, for some minutes, a galling fire in this dreadfully effective position. Fast and fierce from the close ruzzles of their guns burst the pale flashes of fire. The *Spitfire* was enveloped in a cloud of smoke—still her artillery was dealing out death and destruction. Already two ports of her opponent were knocked into one, while, on the other hand, the American musquetry was sweeping her decks in every direction. A scene of mutual slaughter ensued; indeed, on both sides, it seemed as if their courage increased with the

carnage. The mangled and mutilated bodies of the dead were now seen thrust through the port-holes, staining, with a crimson hue, the bosom of the dismal heep, as they sunk for ever into the ready grave. Even the elements were lulled by the thunder of the cannon; the sea went down, and the wind abated. This circumstance seemed to facilitate their nearer approach. Both vessels, at the same moment, sheered closer together. They nearly came muzzle to muzzle. Each imagined the object of the other was to board. The American, perhaps, somewhat too prematurely, threw a division of his boarders on his fore-castle to receive the assailants. Burton, who was not more bodily than mentally active, took immediate advantage of their exposed position, and sent among them, *en masse*, a shower of shattering 'canister,' which half annihilated the panting group.

A tremendous cheer, as stunning almost as the thunder of her own artillery, now resounded on the *Spitfire's* deck. "Bravo, our side!" cried the boatswain—"Keep up that sort o' fun, and you'll soon have to take her in tow. Hurrah!—Strike out abaft—start their trunnels—rip her up, boys—rip her up,—damn it, never say *die*!"—an exclamation the more singular at this moment, as the dead and dying were dropping around him in every direction.

The effect of Burton's fire was forcibly felt by the enemy. They however rallied again; and now the riflemen aloft retaliated for their loss below. The purser, captain's clerk, and two little midshipmen, were all picked off, and fell in fast succession, by the murderous dexterity of the American marksmen.

The bends* of both vessels were all but rubbing together. A struggle of personal strength ensued at the very mouths of their cannon. The natural rancour of the dusky native of Columbia now rose to a pitch of indescribable fury. With teeth gnashing, mouth foaming, and eyes distorted, and almost starting from their sockets, they commenced another description of warfare through the port-holes; endeavouring to snatch from the British their

* The outer strong planks on the lower part of a ship's side.

sponges and rammers, fiercely lungeing in savage ambush with the pike, or parrying avenging sabre cuts with the Indian tomahawk.

The lee-lurch of one vessel, and the weather roll of the other, occasionally causing the outer arms of their respective 'spare' and 'sheet' anchors to come in collision, Burton and the boatswain endeavoured to lash them together. This daring attempt attracted the immediate attention of the American marksmen aloft. Both ball and buck-shot were levelled at their heads, and fell fast around them.

"Hilloa!" cried the boatswain, looking abaft,—"*Scarborough* warning! D—— their *eyes*, they might have the manners too, to sing out stand from under."

A triple stream of blood dripping from the fingers of his left hand, gave the speaker the first intimation of his having received a deep flesh wound in his arm. "Here," said he, untying the handkerchief from about his loins, and handing it to Burton—"Here, Sir, just please to pass a few riding turns to stop the leak."

The wound had hardly been bound by his gallant superior, ere the undaunted tar, placing himself in a menacing attitude, and shaking his fist, as he alternately looked up at both the American's tops; loudly vociferated—"I'll sarve you out for this, you bush-fighting beggars—we'll give it you presently."

Staunch, who had been keenly watching, with eagle-eye, every movement of his adversary, noticing the threatening posture of Brace, exclaimed, in a tone of delight, "Look, Hasty, look!—look at that fine intrepid fellow."

"Ah, Sir, he ought to be boatswain of a battle-ship."

"Of a battle-ship?" said Stowel, "d—— it, he ought to be boatswain of a dock-yard."*

Five and thirty minutes had now elapsed, since the action commenced. At this period, when in the very act of extinguishing a fire, which broke out in the quarter-deck hammocks, the gallant Hasty received a grape-shot in the groin.

"Bear him below immediately," said the captain, who

* For gentlemen of this class, the highest possible promotion they can obtain, is that of a boatswain of a dock-yard.

evidently sympathized deeply in this disaster, while covering from the observation of the seamen, the writhing and distorted features of this ill fated sufferer with his handkerchief. Fast bleeding from a deep and mortal wound, he was borne in agonising torture to the gun-room, by a couple of topmen, who had but just discharged the melancholy office of committing to the deep the body of a messmate. In vain he cried for surgical aid. The Assistant was otherwise indispensably occupied; and not two minutes before the lieutenant had been wounded, the surgeon himself, in the very act of amputating the right arm of the sergeant of marines, had his head severed from his body, by the untimely entrance of a two-and-thirty pound shot, between wind and water. For, alas! in small flush-decked vessels,* even these ministering angels of mercy are not exempt from the fatal consequences of a combat in which they do not personally participate.

As yet, no intention to board his antagonist had been contemplated by the American commander; and since Burton's and the boatswain's intrepid attempt to lash both vessels together, he gradually luffed to the wind, or sheered wider apart from his eager opponent. This deviation from the line on which, for so many minutes, both brigs had been previously running, now altered the respective positions of each; for instead of being fairly abreast of her antagonist, the *Spitfire* became considerably abaft the enemy's beam, and found herself dropping astern and to leeward.

The position in which the two contending vessels were now placed, however, proved favourable to the immediate interest of both brigs, which for the present had ceased firing. The Americans were at a positive stand still for powder; and not a gun could be brought to bear by the British. Indeed, the greater part of the *Spitfire's* star-board guns had, for some time, been rendered totally useless, by the injurious effect of their own recoil—these guns had drawn the bolts by which they were fastened to the bulwarks, broken their 'breechings,' split their slides, and

* There is no cock-pit in a flush-decked vessel, and the gun-room dining-tables are, in such vessels, appropriated to amputation and other surgical operations.

some of the after carronades had actually 'kicked' themselves out of their carriages, and lay dismounted in the middle of the deck.

Staunch and Stowel were seen in close debate; and from the manner in which the north-countryman was pointing with his finger to certain lines, illustrative of the positions of the two vessels, or tracing a diagram on the drum-head of the capstan, it was obvious he was endeavouring to impress upon the mind of his superior, the necessity of carrying into immediate effect some new manœuvre.

"'Twill never do," cried Staunch—"we must clap sail on the brig, and heave her about."

"Weel, Sir, you can't do beeter, as no doot he 'd rather come round on t'other tack wi' ourselves, than run the chance of a badgering abaft."

It was too apparent to Staunch, there was nothing to be done with his starboard, or rather disabled battery. His leeward position deprived him of the power of closing with his antagonist sufficiently near to enable him to throw his boarders on the American's deck. But his larboard guns were all effective, and he had been revolving in his mind, while at the capstan with the master, how he could soonest bring them into play.

Calling, therefore, Burton and the boatswain aft, he apprised them both of the plan which had just struck him, to enable him to renew the struggle with effect, and, if possible, gain some advantage over an enemy he now ascertained, to his cost, to be more than his equal in many respects,—he directed Brace to reeve temporary 'tacks and sheets' for the courses, instead of those already shot away. For a few seconds he seemed lost in thought, when, observing the boatswain busied in these preparations, he turned his dark, animated eye around to the men at their quarters, as if desirous that his wish should be anticipated, rather than his tongue should be compelled to issue an order he full well knew must be attended with great risk of life to any who obeyed it—"And, Burton," said he, rubbing his hands, "if a few of our light-footed lads could but lay out on the taupsel yards, and let out a reef, in the face—" he would have said, 'of those infernal

riflemen,' had he not been anticipated by several of the topmen simultaneously jumping on the hammocks to ascend the rigging.

"Face 'em!"—said one of those alluded to—"a sharp knife, and a clear conscience, can face the devil himself."

"Keep down"—said the captain—"keep down, my lads—don't let the enemy observe our movements until all is ready."

The topsail-haliards had been led along the deck, and the "tacks and sheets" rove ready for hauling on board; when four (for Staunch was obliged to repress their zeal, and permit no more to expose themselves aloft) of the daring topmen, who had volunteered for this service, flew up the ratlings of the fore and main rigging. "Cut away," cried Staunch—"don't stand to untie," as the intrepid tars threw themselves out on the lofty yards. "Cut away earings,* cringles, and all, if you like."

Every eye on deck anxiously followed their brave companions in their flight aloft, who were no sooner discovered by the American marksmen than they opened their fire on the poor fellows, as they hung on the giddy height of the yards, in a position sufficiently perilous without the super-added danger of thereby exposing their persons to the nearer aim of the expert enemy. The two men on the main-topsail-yard accomplished their task unhurt; but just as the brave fellow on the weather end of the fore-topsail-yard, which was nearest that top where the enemy's marksmen were concealed, had eased down the earing of the sail, he was shot through the heart, and fell, 'abast all' dead upon deck.

Twenty men killed by a broadside could not have produced such an effect on the British as this solitary fall, or more effectually kindled afresh their wrath. "Poor Boney,†—poor Boney," for that was the nick-name by which he went in the ship, resounded fore-and-aft on her deck—"we 'll yet revenge your fall."

* Earings—small lines, by which the upper corners of the topsails are fastened to the yard-arms.

† On board most ships of war, the 'Gally Politicians'—the 'King's-Benchers,' and the 'Birds' who gather round the grate a'night to argufy, as it is termed, are sure to be designated by a name of notoriety applica-

Torn and tattered as they were, the topsails were hoisted a few feet higher, and both courses set in a second.

"Ready about," said Staunch—"Sail trimmers in their stations—and let the captains of the lee-guns stand by to open on his stern when in stays."

Hardly had the *Spitfire* felt the force of her additional canvass, ere the American, to frustrate Staunch's intention, had recourse to a *ruse* characteristic of his country. Though not a single gun on his lee side was loaded, he bore round up, as if prepared to pour a raking broadside into his adversary's bows. To avoid encountering the desolating sweep which this evolution of his adversary threatened, Staunch put his helm up too. Both vessels now wearing round together on the opposite tack, brought their effective batteries, on the sides hitherto not engaged in the action, to bear upon each other. Though the American's artifice so far defeated Staunch's manœuvre, as to discharging his lee-guns when in stays* on the enemy's quarter, still, as it brought his larboard battery into play, it, in the end, contributed to effect his original design.

Although the American still retained the 'weather-gage,' a point of the utmost importance; the order of battle might be said to be reversed as far as respected their renewing the action on opposite tacks, and with guns which hitherto had not been uninjured in the ruinous conflict. The Englishman not being as close aboard, nor yet as nearly abreast of his adversary as he could wish, carried his courses in order to bring him along side, and kept a close luff: with the hope that some accidental cir-

ble, as the *Jacks* think, to the peculiar pretensions of these would-be warriors and statesmen. The leaders formerly were generally nicknamed '*Benbow*,' or '*Billy Pitt*.' A '*Captain of the Sweepers*,' or a '*Captain of the Head*,' alias, the warden of the worshipful company of Nightmen on board, whose pretensions to such distinctions happened to be sustained by his talents for harangue, was invariably dubbed '*Charley Fox*.' In latter days, these worthies have given place to more modern titles of eminence. *Jack* is a bizarre animal, and delights on all occasions to unite the lofty and the ludicrous; and a stranger will often be startled, if at all a believer in ghosts, at hearing a sailor sing out to another on the 'tween decks—"Pass the word fur'ard there for *Bony-party*." We have never been on board any ship in which there was not one of these emperors.

* The operation of tacking, or putting the ship about.

cumstance might place him in a situation to grapple with the enemy.

"Luff! Stowel, luff!" said Staunch, "if you love me, keep the main tautsle touching."

"Luff it is, Sir—she's lifting already."

"That's your sort, Master"—said Staunch,—"**Hug** the wind as you would your wife.—Hurrah, level low, my lads, and she's all your own!"

Perceiving the admirable direction of their fire, Burton roared out with rapture—"That's *you*—Bravo, boys—keep peppering his ports, and spoil his paint."

Here the boatswain, as he discharged his carronade, which struck his opponent between wind and water—shouted, "Hurrah—North Corner* for ever—*That'll* knock the barnacles off her bottom."

The reader will no doubt exclaim, 'There must be a merry demon of mischief bent on these mortal errands to man,' when he perceives those whom life's breath can scarcely be said to be within their nostrils, thus sporting with Death as he grimly looks through the portals of life. Yet no less true is it, that this is but a faint picture of that reckless disregard of life, and irreverent approach to death, evinced oft by our sailors in the intervals between the roar of cannon and the heat of action.

To prevent a recurrence of those accidents which had previously happened to his starboard guns, Staunch had taken the precaution to diminish, in a greater proportion than usual, the powder in his cartridges, which produced a result not at all contemplated by him, namely, rendering his shot more likely to splinter in striking his opponent's bulwarks.

Finding the *Spitfire* was closing and weathering on him fast, the American hauled on board his fore and main tacks, as if determined not to permit his opponent to approach nearer, perceiving that his musquetry was now acting with deadly effect on the British. Both vessels, therefore, for some minutes, maintained their respective positions.

* Sailors' joys and sorrows, it will be perceived, are always laid down in the chart of life by the cardinal points. Perhaps the spot most halloed in a sailor's reminiscence, is 'North Corner' at Plymouth Dock, the name of which sufficiently indicates its position.

The work of slaughter again recommenced with redoubled fury ; and now Staunch perceived, with dismay, that his fire was beginning to slacken, in consequence of the fatal precision with which the riflemen singled out for death the captains of his guns. This, added to the increased effect of the enemy's cannonade, made dreadful havoc on his deck ; which, now rendered slippery by the blood and brains of the fallen, was again and again strewn with sand by his orders.

At this period, the enemy's gaff fell upon deck, burying under the enormous folds of his boom mainsail, most of the men engaged at his after carronades. Here was an opportunity for attempting to board the enemy, which Staunch was condemned to forego with indescribable regret, in consequence of his distance, and being to leeward. A very few seconds, however, elapsed, ere the fall of the enemy's gaff was followed by the *Spitfire's* maintopmast falling over to leeward, and thus luckily on the side disengaged. As is usual on such occasions, the British received the unlucky omen with cheers. The motive of our tars in this instance might possibly appear to a novice quite unaccountable. Doubtless he would be surprised beyond measure at finding shouts of triumph succeed to one of the most unfortunate mishaps that could possibly befall a vessel during an engagement. Indeed, it would seem as if the spirit of the sailor revelled in ruin : or that, in his own words, he was never more delighted than when " the sticks begin to tumble about his head." Certain, however, it is, whatever may be the motive, that this indomitable spirit tends eminently to support that state of excitement, which so often ensures to British valour hard-earned victory.

The *Spitfire's* people were now seen with knives and hatchets in their hands, severing the ropes, and hewing away the rigging which attached the cumbrous wrock to the ship's side, and made her, despite of her helm, swerve from the course. " Cut away, my fine fellows—cut away !" cried Staunch. " Don't let the wreck stop her way through the water."

From being merely attired in a plain round jacket, (such as any of his midshipmen might have worn,) with

a steadiness of mien and coolness of purpose, watching every movement of the enemy, Staunch had not hitherto occupied the notice of the riflemen aloft ; but now, his activity rendering him conspicuous, he, while in the act of leaning over the lee-quarter-deck-hammocks, and giving directions for cutting away the wreck, was severely wounded in the right loin. Yet, even in this instance, his cool courage prompted him to conceal his own disaster ; and he sustained himself while in the greatest pain, by holding on the hammock rails, until with difficulty he could be prevailed on to allow himself to be removed to the lee-side of the capstan, so as to shelter him from being again marked by the insidious foe. Just as Burton repaired to the spot, the pain of his superior's wound, and the effusion of blood consequent thereon, had so far subdued his strength, and rendered him faint, that he was in the act of swooning. The wounded hero had scarce time to grasp Burton by the hand, and point to the colours at the peak, faintly smiling in his face ; as much as to remind him of a duty which he felt confident would be performed ; when the lieutenant exclaimed—

“Never fear, Sir : we may go down, but our colours *never* shall.”

Staunch had hardly been borne to his cabin, when, as if the Fates had conspired against the *Spitfire*, her bowsprit, already crippled by a double-headed shot, fell athwart her fore-foot, taking with it her fore-topmast over her bows.

“Up with the courses, Burton ! Up with 'em quickly,” cried Stowel, “or the foremast 'ill follow.”

“No, no, no ! Don't start a stitch. You forget, man—the fore-runners are up,” cried Burton, with that promptitude and decision of character peculiar to himself. “Cut away for'ard, and take the weight off the head of the foremast. Hurrah, abaft ! Another round, and she strikes !”

While thus animating his men, and taking advantage of a partial cessation of smoke to point, with precision, himself, a gun at his adversary's rudder, he imagined he perceived through the port-hole the enemy's main-mast beginning to totter. He waited a few seconds at the

breech of the gun to satisfy himself that no optical illusion had flattered his sight. "Hurrah!" cried he, "I thought I couldn't be deceived." He was not. The next leech-lurch brought the American's taunt and towering spar, with all its lower and lofty yards, wide-spread canvass, and heavy rigging, tumbling over the side into the water with a tremendous crash, and precipitating five of his deadliest marksmen, uninvited, into the dread realms of Neptune.

Deprived of his after sail, the enemy's vessel became now unmanageable, and fell on board the *Spitfire*, hooking, with the flukes of his best-bower anchor, the weather fore-rigging of the British brig. This opportunity was not overlooked by Burton, who, seizing his sabre, which lay unsheathed on the capstan, brandished it aloft, shouting, in a tone which was heard distinctly along the *Spitfire's* deck, while the fire of both ships slackened, "Stand fast—stand fast your fire—follow me every man that can raise a cutlass!"

Fast as he flew to gain a footing on the enemy's deck, he soon found himself not the foremost of about forty of the British; who mounted the side, swung themselves, sword in hand, on the enemy's forecastle, and tumbled, pell mell, among the Americans, who now crowded forward to repel the invaders. The *Spitfires* had been so long engaged amid fire and smoke, that the latter had begrimed not only their faces, but naked bodies; which were here and there palely seamed by streams of sweat, which ran from their burning temples. The effect of excessive excitement was, in more than one instance, contrasted by the sunken eye of exhaustion, which too visibly betrayed a frame deserted by nature; though a heart sustained by all enduring valour. From these appalling appearances, heightened by the clotted gore with which many had besmeared themselves, in heaving the mangled dead overboard, or the fresh blood gouts which streamed adown from their own green wounds, the assailants assumed, if not the aspect of fiends, certainly the most formidable resemblance to those wild warriors who hideously paint and tattoo their bodies preparatory to battle.

The moment they reached the enemy's deck, Burton, leading on his men, was met by the master, a powerful, strong built, resolute looking man, armed with sword and pistol : the latter he levelled with keen eye at the British officer, which, happily for him, flashed in the pan. Foiled in his aim, he flung the treacherous weapon full at his adversary's head, carrying off the lieutenant's hat, and slightly scalping him. Burton now rushed on his huge antagonist, and they crossed swords, a weapon in the use of which he was peculiarly expert. A few seconds had hardly elapsed, ere the Columbian Ajax lay stretched on deck. The victor strode over the body, and cheered on his men to the attack. Fierce and resolute was the contest, where nothing but valour could compensate for the disparity of numbers.

The roar of cannon had now subsided, and was succeeded by the clink and clatter of brittle blades, which not unfrequently broke short in their handles, disappointing meditated revenge, and often occasioning the loss of the assailant's life for that of the assailed. The Americans were slowly dislodged from off their fore-castle, fighting foot by foot.

Burton, elate with his success, eagerly sought the American captain, who, in consequence of the loss of both his lieutenants, was compelled to lead on his men alone ; whom he now successfully rallied to a desperate charge, in which they beat down the British blades with the weight of their muskets butt ends. Perceiving the *Spit-fires* were beginning to give away, Burton shouted with energy—" Hold on—hold on your own, my lads." At this moment the well known voice of the boatswain, who led on a few fresh hands, was heard roaring in the rear—" Make a lane there !—I told the bush-fighting beggars I'd sarve 'em out !—Hurrah for *Sallyport*." His furious haste into the thickest part of the combat, kindled afresh the spirit of emulation. Burton thus supported, soon gained the quarter-deck, driving before him the enemy, who now tore down the fire screens, and tumbled down the hatchways in the utmost consternation.

This opportunity, it may be supposed, was not lost on

some eager blades, for inflicting the broad R,* as they term it, on the heads of several, as they vanished below, without picking their steps.

"Ship the gratings, and secure them below," cried Burton.

"May be Dan won't do that same," said an Irish waister, who had spent four long years peeping through the bars of a French prison—"It's myself, my joy, that likes to be lookin at the inimy on the right side o' the gratin'."

The 'gratings were shipped,' and a marine sentinel placed over each. At this moment of complete triumph, an incident occurred, not without its parallel in the history of the late war, however revolting to humanity. While the sentinel on the main-hatchway grating was peaceably occupied in this duty, he was deliberately shot, by a cowardly ruffian from below. The fury and savage hate which this atrocity on the part of the vanquished excited in the British, was such that it required all Burton's presence of mind and powers of persuasion, to repress their appetite for revenge, and the infliction of summary and ample retribution on the offender. While some shouted aloud for the marines to fire on them below, others, headed by the boatswain, tore up the gratings, and were with difficulty prevented by Burton's prayers and menaces, from descending sword in hand among the prisoners: who now, alarmed at the consequence of their treachery, cried for quarter, and begged to be allowed to give up the offender.

Over this unhappy man's fate it is perhaps best to draw the veil. Aware of the certainty of his doom, he was handed struggling on deck.

Wanton cruelty, under circumstances of such deadly exasperation, makes retaliation—justice; and it may be anticipated that in punishing a crime so atrocious, had the offender a "thousand lives, their full revenge had stomach for them all."

Here a scene of the most extraordinary exhilaration, and extravagant joy ensued, surpassing all power of lan-

* Arrow.

guage to describe. A thousand tongues appeared to be unloosened at once—congratulations, gratitude to Heaven, and the effusions of affectionate friendship, embodied themselves in short sentences. “Thank God!—thank God!”—“Well, Bill, my bo, I can swear you were first aboard.” “Hurrah for Old England.” “Didn’t I tell you her mainmast ’ou’d go?—I’ll bet a week’s grog, there’s one o’ my own chalking in it now.” “The slaughter-house did the job.” “D——n their eyes, they fought hard for it, too!—Nothing like boarding after all!” “Didn’t I back you, Bob, like a trump?”—“My eyes and limbs, how the beggars tumbled below.” “Bloody wars, how we sarved ’em out!”

These strains of triumph were, however, at times, interrupted by a volley of imprecations and oaths, which, however unsuitable to the morality of our times, were, in *Jack’s* opinion, perfectly suitable to the dignity of the occasion. The young men seemed nearly delirious with joy, at the result of their first encounter, shouting and flourishing their cutlasses, and dancing like madmen on the decks; while their seniors flung away their weapons, to grasp each other by the hand, and exchanged the most affectionate congratulations.

The boatswain swore to his mate, “D——n his eyes, but he’d make him a bishop”—but again recollecting himself, as if he had yet a duty to accomplish, he summoned the *Spitfires* to celebrate their triumph in due form, shouting, like Achilles of old—“Come, boys, freshen your nip—rig your roarers, and stand by for three thundering cheers. All ready?—Wait for the pipe—Now—now then.” The welkin rung with their

“Hurrah!

“Hurrah!!

“Hurrah!!!”

“And one for coming up,” cried Brace, accompanying each cheer with his ‘call,’ and terminating the fourth with his chirping pipe of belay.

Had Homer, Ovid, or any bard of antiquity described the effects of these similar shouts of triumph, the fabled god of ocean would doubtless have been introduced gracing their victory with his presence, and waving his tri-

dent over the brave tars as a tribute of admiration to their courage. We are not poets—the reader must therefore content himself with learning,—that, roused by the uproar, old Neptune raised his hoary head from the briny deep, only to smile at the frolics of his favourite sons.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A ROWLAND FOR AN OLIVER.

— Come ; we have no friend
But resolution.

SHAKESPEARE.

ALTHOUGH the commodore had now been some time at that place pointed out by his medical man as fittest for the recovery of his health, it very perceptibly began to decline. So much so, that the old gentleman himself formed the project for returning home immediately with his family, and placing himself under the care of his friend Senna, who now, as a medical man, had risen as much in his estimation, as he had fallen in the good opinion of his sister-in-law ; in consequence of the insult offered to her pride, by that elaborately penned, but ill-judged, and ludicrous letter, containing his singular proposal of marriage.

The honest simplicity of the commodore rendered it quite impossible, that amid all the plotting and cajolery practised on him by his friend and his sister-in-law, he should perceive any cause for suspicion ; and he therefore, naturally enough, argued with himself, that the man who had the sagacity to prophesy approaching illness, from symptoms which he himself had cherished as indications of health, must be best able to deal with the subtleness of a disease, foreseen only by himself. The dislike, if not absolute horror, felt by the old gentleman, of again attracting the impertinent eyes of the Cheltenham public, after the discouraging reception he and his factotum had

experienced in their *outré début*, in the 'well-walk,' by confining him to the house, aggravated those symptoms, which were originally the consequence of his ill-advised journey at this bleak season of the year. Added to which, although he had the waters daily brought to him, he committed a capital error in consulting his palate rather than his constitution; and preferring, because it had no disagreeable taste or flavour, the chalybeate to the saline. As the former was poison to a man labouring under affections like his, it is not to be wondered at that he hourly became worse and worse; and also conscious that he had little to expect from any prolonged stay at this place. His increasing infirmities afforded his sister-in-law opportunities innumerable for carrying her ambitious projects into execution. Under one pretext or other the mornings were spent in rambling about town on foot; visiting, frequenting the auction-room; or exploring, in Major Hervey's carriage, the beauty of the country round about Cheltenham. The major himself was sure to be one of the party in all these excursions, and by his assiduities, succeeded but too well in rendering them unmindful of the poor invalid; who now began to feel himself comparatively neglected, and treated, by common consent, as though unfit to enjoy any society. After having remonstrated in vain with Mrs. Crank, on the subject of his being left for hours together to the care of menials, he at length determined to disclose his mind to his worthy cockswain, or, as he termed it, "call a council of *war*;" the primary object of which was to preserve peace. In the course of their deliberation, Tiller remarked, "That though the coast was clear, for himself and his master to cut and run, whenever they chose, yet he didn't think 't would be an easy matter to get the women under weigh. Indeed," added Thomas, "I think both the ladies are making tolerable head-way with their men—though, I must say—I think the misses is stronger on the gospel-shop-chap, than Miss Emily's on the soger."

The captain, although mortified by an intimation of a danger he never before apprehended, and which seemed to portend little short of open mutiny, had some reason to think Tiller's suspicion was not destitute of foundation,

He was, however, determined, shattered as he was, to support the dignity of his cloth at all hazards ; and when the ladies returned to dinner, which, in this instance, they did alone, he embraced the earliest opportunity to sound their sentiments. The first allusion that was made to his state of health by Emily, was sufficient for his purpose,

"Why, child," said he, so far from getting any better, I only get worse every-day—and if that isn't a warning to be off, I don't know what is!"

"Off!" said Emily, with surprise.

"*Off!*" repeated Mrs. Crank, in a higher key.

"Yes, *off*," re-echoed the deep bass of the veteran ; "and the sooner the better—for if we stay any longer, I shall have no strength left to bear the fatigue of travelling."

"That, certainly," replied his niece, "would be very unfortunate. But, cannot you, my dear uncle, place yourself under some eminent physician here ? Besides, you've hardly given the waters a fair trial."

"Trial!—what ! d'ye want to drench me to death ? It's no use talking of trials, my dear—the *last of all* is not very far off."

"Don't speak so, uncle," said his favourite, "it makes me quite melancholy."

"Well, well, I'll not say a word more—I wou'dn't fret so good a girl for the world ; but I know I never was so bad in my life—I see I've nothing else for 't but to return home—Senna shall have another chance to clap me again on my pins. So, sister," continued he, addressing Mrs. Crank, "you must make arrangements so as to enable us to start the day after to-morrow."

"That would be altogether impossible—nor can I see the least necessity for any such haste as respects yourself—but if you are resolved on it, I hope you will not expect us to relinquish Cheltenham, the moment it begins to be agreeable, and we have formed some desirable acquaintances ?"

"Why, as we started together, I think we ought all to return together," said the old invalid, evidently piqued at this indifference ; "besides,—a brace of single women might have found themselves all the safer under convoy."

"Thanks to Providence, it would appear as if it were so disposed that we should not want a protector: for it so happens that our worthy exemplary friend, Doctor Styles, will, about the period when we could leave this conveniently, be called into our part of the country on a missionary meeting—he is a zealous servant of his Master—a man of great unction in preaching—and I trust that my dear child will not lose that opportunity of increasing her intimacy with so pious—"

"Stand fast there, Katharine! I hope the girl's more sense than to become intimate with any such fellow. What can she want with a journeyman carpenter?"

"A *what*?" said Emily quickly: "you are not so
ous, uncle?"

"Never, more so, my love!—and now, sister, once for all, I will say it's a disgrace, that a woman of your reading and all that, should listen to such a scamp in a pulpit—what can *he* know about divinity?—about as much as *you* do of turning-in a dead-eye."

"I feel," said his sister, kindling with zeal for the *doctor's* character, "I feel shame on your account, Sir."

"Say on your own," interrupted the captain.

"No, Sir, I have nothing to reproach myself with in this instance—I would fain preserve my daughter's principles, which it seems to be the object of your sinful mockery of religion to overturn, and render her as great an unbeliever as yourself."

"There you are again: when you're in the wrong box, you always try to throw the blame on me. Now I'm as stout a believer as you, though no chopper of wood chap shall chalk-out a creed for me—I'd as soon trust a marine at the weather-wheel, or a stage-coachman with a collier up Swinn. No, no, give me a regular branch pilot from the Trinity-house,—and why not? Were ever these chaps brought up to the service?"

"You really are," said this *pattern* of piety, reddening with rage, "a perfect heathen, Mister Crank, to revile in this blasphemous manner, a person of Doctor Style's extraordinary gifts and unction in preaching, as well as sanctity of life; attested as they are, by the daily increasing congregation which flocks around him to feed on the manna of the word. I begin to think it really dangerous

to be under the same roof with one, who makes as the Proverbs say, a 'mockery of sin.'"

"It shan't be for long then, I can tell you; For to-morrow," said the veteran, resolutely, "I'll top my boom."

"Don't, dear uncle—don't be angry—do stop a few days longer, and we'll return home together," said Emily, entreatingly.

"No, dear, I'll not stop—it would be the death of me," said Crank. "As for you," continued he, impressively, "I don't blame you, or if I do—I forgive you; because you're young, and led astray by your mother—but since you've been here, I've seen nothing but courting, and heard nothing but canting—and ill and crippled as I am, have hardly been treated by you like a Christian."

"I most devoutly wish you *were* one," ejaculated the matron, with admirable composure—"Our great Teacher assures us, all things are possible with Him, otherwise I should despair of you; and pronounce your conversion as improbable, as that a camel should go through the eye of a needle."

"Ball-off that yarn!" said the person whose probable future doom was the subject of this charitable descant—"it's quite long enough!—I've done, and am determined!—Do as you like—night brings home all stragglers—and when you've had your fling, you'll of course bear up for Camperdown."

"But you'll send us the carriage back, won't you, uncle?" said his niece.

"Perhaps, my dear," said her mother, rather more unguardedly than was her wont—"circumstances may render it unnecessary to give your uncle that trouble."

"Hang the trouble!" said the old gentleman, whose resentment had not sufficiently subsided, to permit him to see the evident import of the expression which had escaped her lips; "I intend," continued he, "to do more, and leave you the carriage altogether. Thomas must be my nurse, and he and I will post it to-morrow forenoon."

The conversation, which had hitherto been too animated to last long, ceased; and the meal was concluded in that

sort of silent reserve, which is not unfrequent where parties find themselves committed or perplexed by unexpected occurrences, or untoward disclosures.

The veteran was, however, as good as his promise—and before noon next day, had performed the first stage of his journey. On the following evening he arrived at home; an event so gratifying to the feelings of the old cockswain, that had he not been too much occupied in contributing all in his power to the invalid's comfort on his arrival, he would not have failed to hoist the colours, despite of its being dark; or, perhaps, have fired a royal salute in honour of the auspicious occasion.

CHAPTER XXXI.

A CLEAR STAGE.

— play one scene
Of excellent dissembling; and let it look
Like perfect honour.

SHAKESPEARE.

THE truth must not be concealed. Although she had affected to treat his determination to return home as abrupt and ill-timed, Mrs. Crank had for some time felt the old gentleman's departure necessary. Her schemes, while he remained, were hourly in danger of being defeated by his artless manner, and thorough disdain of every thing like disguise. The former was, perhaps, acquired in his profession, while the latter might (but for the immortal Locke's interdiction) almost be said to be an innate principle of his soul. These, and not his impiety in reviling the sect to which she belonged, were the real reasons which in an unguarded moment, had induced her to assert her conviction, that it was dangerous to be under the same roof with him. Nor was she mistaken. The presence of such dangerous materials as these rendered it very improbable she could carry on her plans with a fair chance

of success. An explosion was possible, nay, probable, every minute. His prejudices were even stronger than his predilections; and he could hardly conceal his antipathy to some of his sister-in-law's visitors, with whom she was more than ordinarily solicitous to be on terms of intimacy and friendship. The unmitigated contempt he felt for every man not regularly brought up to those particular professions of which they affected to be members, could not fail to display itself in a cynical sneer, or sour sarcasm, whenever he considered himself bearded in his own house by the dogmatizing assumption, or pert preaching, of those *pois di sant* divines, who formed, at times, part of the evening circle at Clarence Lodge. For the major, who, he perceived, was rapidly becoming a favourite, he had no such ground of dislike. He was a gentleman, easy and affable in his manners, and liberal in disposition; but it was impossible not to perceive that Crank thought his coat was of the "wrong colour," and, to the terror of Mrs. Crank, he had been overheard, by the major himself, on one occasion, inquiring of his confidant Tiller, "if that soger was gone yet?"

The mere removal of the veteran from Cheltenham, to bring him to which place she had been obliged to resort to so much artifice, was, for these reasons, an object of the utmost importance; and the moment he was gone, she felt relieved from half the difficulties that interposed between her and the accomplishment of her wishes. Liberated now from all apprehensions, she resumed the field with renewed energy and confidence of success. It had been always a subject of considerable apprehension, during Crank's residence at Clarence Lodge, that he might, with his usual bluntness, allude, in a way that could not escape the observation of his visitors, (for he always spoke so as to be understood) to his friend Burton; and the claims which that individual had on the gratitude, if not esteem of the whole family. Had she even presumed to mention the subject to him, as one on which he ought to preserve silence, she well knew his hatred of disguise would have prompted him openly to profess his acknowledgments to Burton the first opportunity that occurred. Indeed, she thought it very likely that such an intimation

from her would lead him to suspect the hitherto undetected influence she had exerted over her daughter's mind and wishes ; and, what would be still worse, prompt, in him, a desire to counteract that influence, or induce him to exhort Emily to consult her own understanding, as well as preference, in a case of so much importance to herself and her future happiness. Armed as the matron felt him to be so long as he made no absolute disposition of his property, she knew it was her interest to keep him in ignorance of the control she exerted over her daughter's feelings. Her admonition, as to the necessity of secrecy on the subject of Burton's attachment, was, therefore, confined to Emily alone ; and that was expressed in language more emphatical, and a solicitude the more marked, as she perceived that Major Harvey's attentions were become so unequivocal, and his preference so openly displayed, that nothing short of the offer of his hand in marriage could be anticipated, or the total interruption of that extreme intimacy which at present existed.

While matters, therefore, continued in this state, she felt it peculiarly incumbent on her to warn her daughter of the extreme impropriety, and, indeed, indelicacy, there would be in admitting to her present admirer, or even to a female *confidante*, that her affections had ever been, in the slightest degree, engaged by another. Her experience of the sex having given her abundant proof that there was nothing of which men were more particularly tenacious, than of an undivided preference on the part of those to whom they paid their addresses ; and that possibly nothing could more enhance the value of a young female in the jealous eye of most suitors, than the reflection, that she had never been exposed even to the attentions of any mortal but themselves. To all these remonstrances Emily lent an attentive ear, through a conviction that it was her duty to listen to every thing which came from her parent with a respect proportioned to that anxiety even for her child's interest. Unpractised as she was in *amatory* politics, she felt no objection arise in her mind while acquiescing in the course of conduct enjoined. To that course she was solely prompted by a dutious compliance with a mother's wishes, without imagining it possible, that while

innocently performing one duty, she might justly be charged with having compromised another —Sincerity.

Further, it would be unsafe perhaps, under these circumstances, to push conjectures as to the state of her feelings. That fierce and indomitable passion which, in man, delights to dare, and struggles to surmount all obstacles ; is, in woman, a deep consciousness,—a keen sensibility, which, in its desire to elude observation and baffle discovery, feeds on the contemplation of its object in secret ; and instinctively shrinks from detection.

Such are the widely different characteristics of the *Man's* Passion of our youth, as exemplified in the opposite *sexes*.

CHAPTER XXVI.

WILL-MAKING.

To this complexion must we come at last.

HAMLET.

HOWEVER complimentary the alarming illness of the captain might have been to the sagacity of his medical man, it failed not to excite in him a surprise, only to be surpassed by that arising from the unaccountable circumstance of the old man being the bearer of no communication, written or verbal, from that lady, to whom he had so explicitly tendered his heart and hand. Ten days had elapsed during which his anxiety had increased, in the same proportion as he became hopeless of the veteran's recovery. The latter circumstance, awakened a train of thought, in which, as usual with him,—*self* predominated. What those conjectures were, may be easily conjectured, from the course he adopted, with respect to his patient, whom he now failed not to apprize of the extreme danger, to be apprehended from recent symptoms of his disorder ; adding, " that he disinterestedly advised him to lose no time in calling in a solicitor, to *do what was right* in his life-

time, and not leave the disposal of his property, in case of accident, open to dispute or litigation, hereafter."

Though always averse to making his will, considering it synonymous to signing his own death-warrant, Crank at length yielded to Senna's suggestion. The attorney, however, was merely employed to draw up a form; blanks being left for the sums, and names, of those whom the veteran had secretly predetermined should partake of his property.

Having so far complied with his friend's unpalatable advice, and made up his mind to die; he, to Senna's no small mortification, seemed still resolved, that as long as the breath was in his body, the secret of the final disposition of his property, should be confided to no one living but his faithful domestic. Senna failed not, at his next visit, to throw his eye, as if purely by accident, over the will, and was startled to perceive nothing definitively arranged. He had hardly left his patient, whose hypochondriac depression of spirit was considerably increased, by not having received, for some time, any tidings from those who were now uppermost in his thoughts, than Tiller was summoned by the old man to his cot-side.

He was lying in bed, feeble, and suffering severely from pain. His right hand was wrapt in a roll of flannel, which prevented the possibility of inditing any thing himself. There was an air of mystery about the old gentleman, which, as it was perfectly unusual, Tiller was not prepared to expect. He was not destined to be long in the dark; for the commodore looking in his face, with a firm though feeble tone of voice, thus addressed the man who had served him with fidelity, in almost every capacity, but in that in which he was about to be employed.

"Can you keep—keep a secret, Thomas?"

"Could the *Boyne* keep her wind, Sir?" replied Thomas, in a tone which bespoke more trust and fidelity than ever was yet evinced by the oath of allegiance.

"Ah, Thomas—she was a fine old ship—could do any thing but speak—But those days are all gone by—we shall never—never be in blue water, again!"

"I doesn't know that, Sir. Who knows, but if so he, you get over this bout, but the Lords of the Admiralty—"

"*My flying days are all over now, Thomas—though no one, thank God, can ever say, I fled from an enemy—But I must now prepare for another flight.*"

"I hope not, Sir: you may depend you're better at home."

Crank here muttered something indistinctly, about his *long home*, as he proceeded—

"Yes, yes, I feel it fast coming on—coming up with me, hand over hand. But I'm not afraid, Thomas—I can meet it like a man—we must all, in our turn, be put out of commission—No, no, there's no use in mincing the matter—we must at once prepare for paying off—so go, and make out a good pen for yourself, and see if you can't fill up the blanks in that parchment," added the feeble old man, pointing to the will, which lay on the table by the side of his cot.

Thomas, who, we before observed, had so high a veneration for his master, that, without permission from head-quarters, he had, during their sojourn at Cheltenham, raised him to the envied rank of admiral, now might have felt himself proportionably flattered by his own promotion to the post of admiral's secretary; had he not felt a misgiving in his mind as to his competency to fulfil, under that character, the superadded duty of proctor. He stood in a posture betokening thoughtfulness and hesitation. His shoulders were shrugged up nearly to his ears, and his eye wistfully explored the relaxed sallow features of the sick man, as if to ascertain whether he was in earnest. He was soon convinced of the steadiness of the old gentleman's resolve, who, with an air of impatience, again commanded him to take his pen and comply with his injunctions. In compliance with the mandate of a man whose authority he rarely dared to dispute, however diffident he was as to the result, he drew a chair, and reluctantly sat down to work.

The reading and filling up the blank spaces in the will were attended with some discussion: a business which might be denominated mere plain-sailing compared with the difficulties they jointly experienced in concocting the *codicil*.

To save repetition, we shall not trouble the reader, but present to his eye, in the Italics which follow, the actual autograph of the intelligent scribe's polished pen.

"Now, Thomas," said Crank, "you must first write at the bottom—'I hereby add this codicil.' "

"This *what*, Sir?" interrogated Tiller.

"Co-di-cil," said Crank, syllabically.

"I axes your pardon, Sir—I doesn't think I can come that ere;—for you see it's impossible to spell properly when a body's a bad pen."

"Oh, never mind, Thomas.—It's no time to be nice now.—Come as near the mark as you can."

Consoled at this hint, the secretary took fresh courage, and proceeded to indite as his master thus slowly dictated.

"*To Thomas Tiller my old coxon and faithful servant, who lost an i—*"(eye)

"Must that be *in*, Sir?" asked Tiller.

"Why, yes, Thomas,—I don't see we can well leave it out. It would spoil what I have in my head," said Crank, endeavouring to remove Tiller's reluctance to have his misfortune recorded in a document of this nature.

"Very well, Sir, as you please—"

"*Lost an i in his Magistees sarvis, and a master in won of his most devout officers—*"

Here Thomas gave indisputable indications of feelings, which, however highly honourable to himself, excessively surprised his master, who exclaimed—

"Why, Thomas!—what.—are you blubbering? We must all come to this!—Come, come, man, swab the spray off your bows."

"Natur's natur, Sir," said Thomas, wiping with the lapel of his jacket the trickling tear from his weather-beaten cheek; "tho' I 'm sartin the death o' the old woman herself would never a brought me to this. But never mind, Sir—here's strike out again—I'll do my duty—tho' I'd rather almost swallow a marlinspike nor handle a pen in the bisness."

"Let's see, what were the last words you got down?" said the veteran, endeavouring to raise himself up in his cot to look over his amanuensis.

"Devout officers, Sir."

"No, no—de-vo-ted—not devout, Thomas,—I never was a psalm-singer, thank God! But go on—"

'De-vo-ted officers I leave all my shirts.'

"I'll not have 'em, Sir," said Tiller, bursting out in an ebullition of affectionate feeling. "I never could abide to look on 'em, much more put 'em on my back."

"Go on, I tell you," said Crank, authoritatively.

'Stockings and particklur all my long West-Ingee white-duck trousers, laid up in ornry in drawr nummer 3.'

"I know, Sir—"

"Don't interrupt me, man!"

'Thomas havin a seaman's jection to ware short breeks, or bend long togs.'

"I'll put that down willinly, Sir—but what's to be done with the *Boyne*?"

"Why, Thomas, I've made up my mind at last—so write"—said Crank slowly dictating.

'I wish the Boyne to be dismantled—her masts, yards, and riggin distried, and her hull berried with mine.'

Here Tiller gave a groan, which startled the afflicted testator.

'Not wishin her to outlive her oner or full in the hands of lubbers.'

'In token of my gratitude for past sarvessus—I bequith to Sammual Senna—my shore-going surgent, the gold mounted glass which kivered the Boyne, and which he has my purmisshon to convert into a kase for inclosin and presarttin putrefied spesmens.'

'Havin lived and fought under the Union-Jack of old England, I dissire the harth-rug, rather than it should run the risk of been ever trampled under foot, may be berried with my body.'

"Sewed up hammock-fashion, I suppose, Sir?"—said Tiller, with awkward sympathy.

"Exactly so, Thomas—and a very good thought."

"Well, now"—Already these words, prefatory to Crank's thought, were committed to paper, and were actually embodied in the codicil.

'To Leaftenant Burton I leve—my quadroon—sexton—brometer—and all my day—and night glasses—signal'

flags—Union-Jack, buntin, &c., for his own private use—and the good of the sarvis.

‘In a-dishon to the new teas above menshoned—I leve to Katrin Crank—all the traps and rigging of her bed-room—with the stuffed crockadile—for which she always eggsprest such a prifference—and which my poor Emily—so much dislikes—and, moreover, I hereby order and direct, the moment I slip my wind—

“I hope I ’ll never see that day,” ejaculated the afflicted scribe.

“Hold your tongue—go on——”

‘My kind—and faithful coxon—shall haul the kullers half-mast down—and then with his own hands burn the signal book on the spot, to prevent it fallin in the posseshun of the enemy.’

“And now, Thomas,” added he, “sign your name as a witness—That is off my mind!”

At this moment the bell rang, and Tiller had hardly time to conceal, according to Crank’s order, this important document, ere the doctor appeared with a letter in his hand, for the receipt of which, he had been perhaps as anxious as the veteran, though through a different motive.

“I hope, my dear friend,” said this sympathizing spirit—“that letter, which bears the Cheltenham post-mark, will tend to compose your anxiety.”

“Well!—come, break the seal, and read out—for, you know, I hav’n’t now the use of either hands or eyes.”

No invitation was requisite, for being permitted himself to read the letter, the doctor’s most sanguine expectations had been more than realized—He commenced slowly and emphatically thus—

“Clarence Lodge, Cheltenham.

“Dear Brother,

“I trust you will, notwithstanding your indisposition, sympathize with us in the feelings inspired, by the gratifying nature of the intelligence we have to communicate. Your usual candour has not suffered me to remain unacquainted with your prejudices, respecting an individual, whose conduct is as exemplary, and unimpeachable as his usefulness under Providence is generally.

admitted, by the little flock of elect and precious souls, committed to his charge—

"Amiable woman!" sighed the enamoured reader.

"For most of your prejudices, originating, as I was aware, in no unkindly feeling to me or mine, I have, wherever conscience was concerned, preserved a respect, perhaps culpable, in one so thoroughly acquainted with the utter worthlessness of every thing, but that saving grace, which can alone illumine earthly and sensual minds."

"Eloquently expressed!" ejaculated Senna.

"Never mind the eloquence, go on, my dear Senna," said Crank, rather impatiently.

"In the present instance, however, I should have done a violence to my own feelings, and been deaf to the still whisperings of that enlightening spirit within, had I hesitated to pursue the course, which, I am convinced, is sanctioned by the purity of its motive—A matrimonial proposal has been made me—"

"What, for Emily, I suppose?" muttered Crank.

A deeper hue of scarlet suffused the rubicund features of the doctor, who was already satisfied in his mind, this allusion was made to her own probable change of condition. Annoyed, however, that his secret should be thus confided to a third party, without his consent, he was heard to mutter—

"Strange!—my letter was *private*, and altogether confidential—but I suppose she means to sound *him* first on the subject."

"Desirable in many respects; and I hope in the society of a man blessed like the doctor, in amiableness of manners and gracious gifts—"

"Feliculously expressed—amiable creature!"

"To pass in peace the evening of a life, sufficiently chequered with misery at its outset, in consequence of an earlier, and unhappy choice."

"What!—Does she mean to insult my brother's memory?—Oh, I smell a rat!—All this palaver 's about herself—unhappy choice indeed!—the luckiest hour of her life!—what else would she have been," said the

angry invalid—"but a country school-mistress, or broken-down governess?—but go on."

Senna was too well satisfied to entertain any doubts—so fearlessly proceeded.

"The preference of so excellent and exemplary a man; and a preacher so generally esteemed and admired for gifts and eloquence in the pulpit," (Senna gasped for breath) "is truly manna to my grateful, humble heart."

Here the words "pride," "hypocrisy," from the doctor's mouth, seemed very impertinently, as it were by a species of cross reading, to form part of the letter.

"Can't you proceed?" cried Crank, whose debility gradually gave way to powerful excitement.—"You look thunderstruck, man—What's the matter?"

Senna slowly complied, and read—

"Within a few days, I trust, our hands, as already are our hearts, will be united.—The scruples of our dear child, I have reason to believe, have, by my patient and persevering admonitions, and the unwearied and affectionate assiduities of Major Harvey, I trust, been so far overcome as to render her disinclined to recall to mind a preference you so unfortunately cherished in her young breast towards that penniless pauper, who is so utterly unworthy of her."

"Ungrateful woman!" cried Crank.

"Ungrateful woman!" echoed Senna.

"Cant and hypocrisy!" rejoined the veteran.

"Treachery and perfidy!" rebutted the man of medicine, flinging aside the letter with fury.

"It's bad enough!" said the old man, "but—I see no treachery."

"Oh, Sir," said the Esculapian, "I am paralyzed!—I'm palsied with horror at her complicated treachery—you know it not,—but I am the depository of her secret.—*She* is the whole and sole cause of all your illness.—It was to defeat your wishes, and to forward her intrigues you were removed to Cheltenham.—Your health, already renovated, was thus sacrificed.—And as I see no hope, my dear friend, of your ever rising from that bed, I—I—and it heartily grieves me to say it—I—I—pronounce her—accessory to your premature death."

In rapid accents, and with an indiscretion which can only be accounted for by rage, and a want of presence of mind, arising from total incapacity to reflect on its consequences, he proceeded to corroborate these singular assertions by a yet more incautious detail of the artifices which had been resorted to by both Mrs. Crank and himself, in order to withdraw him from his home.—Crank, mute with astonishment, listened to the tale, to him, fraught with terror. He felt his life had been the sacrifice of their mutual duplicity.—But as the greater and more powerful feeling absorbs the lesser, his indignation against Senna was as dust in the balance, compared with the weight of resentment he felt towards the ungrateful woman who had so coolly planned his destruction.

CHAPTER XXVII.

FINALE.

———You are very near my
Brother in his love.

SHAKESPEARE.

BURTON, on arriving in port with his prizes, found at least one objection to his prospects of happiness obviated. His share in the captured merchantman, alone, was calculated at three thousand pounds; and he had not been four days in harbour, ere the only remaining obstacle, to the absorbing wish of his heart, was removed by an official account of his promotion to the rank of Commander.

Those words, "When you can pay your mess," (that is, become a man of independence) "and ship the other swab, you shall have *my* consent, if you have the girl's," which had so painfully haunted him by day in the midst of duty, and mingled by night in his dreams; as though they portended the indefinite postponement of promised felicity, he, for the first time, recalled to his recollection, with an *intense feeling of delight*, which none can appreciate, who

have not been similarly circumstanced. He now remembered, with satisfaction, the terms of that contract, which, at the time, appeared to him so discouragingly severe; and whose fulfilment was so problematical. He perceived that every condition had been complied with: and it is not difficult to imagine that, with a young man of Burton's complexional character, and under the influence of a passion he had so long been compelled to control; that he calculated on the prompt fulfilment of the contract, with all the sanguine enthusiasm of an ardent lover. Armed, therefore, with those credentials, which he had every reason to believe would be unquestionable in the court of Cupid, his resolve was instantly formed; and ere two days had elapsed, subsequent to Senna's penitential confession, as to the arts which had been so fatally practised on the unhappy invalid, Burton himself stood at the veteran's bedside to claim his niece's hand. Mutual explanations succeeded to cordial greeting—the story of the old man's sorrows, and of the young man's joys were rapidly interchanged. As the young commander concluded the narrative of his recent triumph, the enthusiastic old officer, for the last time in this life, was seen to flourish his withered arm over his aged head; while Burton's heart was too kind not to mingle the tributary tear with the too visible anguish of his old friend.

By a rapid transition, natural under such circumstances, the conversation turned on the all-engrossing subject of his attachment. He repeated the old gentleman's promise—dwelt on his own minute compliance with every condition,—and threw himself upon Crank's generosity for its fulfilment.

"Ah, my dear fellow!—I'm satisfied you deserve the girl, and I wish her hand was *still* at my disposal—you'll see what cause I have to fear it's too late, if you read that letter, which, I am grieved to say, has been two days in my possession," said the veteran, as he pulled the ominous document from under his pillow.

Burton's alarm was indescribable; he snatched the paper, and in looking for the signature, discovered that paragraph, which acquainted him with the whole extent of his misfortune—His usual promptitude forsook him—he

stood mute and motionless ; while unconsciously, he dropped the letter on the floor.

Happily his old friend's presence of mind came to his aid ; with an energy surprising, in his enfeebled situation, he thrust his purse into his hand, vehemently exclaiming—

“ There 's money—fly—save her from the soger—four horses—crack-on every thing—your only chance ! ”

“ I feel it ! ” said Burton, recovering from his stupor ; “ but without your written consent, expedition would be fruitless : for you well know her mother's hostility to the cloth.”

“ That you shall have,” said the Commodore, furiously tearing off the bandages from his right hand ; and with the ready aid of Tiller, accomplishing a task, which, an hour before, both would have imagined impossible.

“ There ! ” said he, in a tone which indicated, that the effort he had made was too much for him, “ *I've* told her my mind—cancel my will—cut her off with a shilling—the day's your own ; if you 're in time—listen to no delay : but clinch the concern for fear of accidents ; ” added he, handing Burton the important document, and falling back on his pillow, completely exhausted.

It was evening ere the young commander started for his destination. A long winter's night succeeded, and the lingering dawn of a chill December's morning still found him inwardly chiding the willing post-boys, and panting steeds, which whirled him precipitately along to the destined scene of happiness or misery.

On his arrival at the ‘ *Plough*, ’ he, without waiting to make any alteration in his attire, betook himself to Clarence Lodge, which bore all the appearance of being deserted. Judge for yourselves ! ye sympathizing souls of either sex, what was his surprise and astonishment, at hearing, from the only menial left behind, that her mistress, and several friends, had but a few minutes before, set out in two carriages, to accompany Miss Emily to church.

He heard no more—as he rushed furiously along the avenue, to the church-yard, his anxious, haggard appearance, attracted every eye. Absorbed in gloomy foreboding—his mind, brooded in moody melancholy on his

now almost assured misery, and irreparable loss. In anger with the world—with himself—with everything—at moments his heart played the rebel against his love, and wounded pride directed his indiscriminating resentment against the object of his idolatry.

Little knew or recked he, the subtle art, the delicate address used in order to beguile her innocent footsteps into a path, for her thickly planted with thorns; and induce her to make a surrender of her feelings—her heart's preference,—through a duteous compliance with the wishes and importunities of an affectionate, though proud-minded, ambitious parent.

How many mysterious conjectures, insinuations, suppressions, concealments, are often placed in the way of a young girl, in the hope of biasing her judgment in that critical choice, which is certain to fix irrevocably the colour of her future life! How many a kind and gentle spirit, is thus cajoled into odious, though indissoluble chains! How many a cruel, though well-meant artifice, is devised by maternal solicitude, to deceive the almost instinctive judgment of a young female; and induce her to yield, even though shuddering with reluctance, her guileless heart, an unblest offering on the golden altar of sordid Interest!—How laughs the Demon as he marks the sacrifice, which so fatally lays the foundation of a woman's misery; so frequently that of her headlong fall from virtue!

He reached the church—the wedding train had entered—he heard an indistinct murmur—a name pronounced, which thrilled to his heart. Blinded with sorrow, passion, frenzy, he staggered up the great aisle. The amazed, alarmed bridegroom read half her story in the shriek of his almost affianced bride; and Burton had barely time to sever those whom another moment would have united for ever. With one arm he extended the letter which authorized this interruption of the ceremony; while, with the other, he encircled all that was dear to him on earth.

“Oh, Burton!—how happy ought I to be—how grateful to Heaven!” exclaimed Emily, as she sought to hide her blushes on his neck.

“Burton!” repeated the astonished Hervey, “is it possible? Good God! 'tis Frederic!”

But what was the lover's surprise, when now for the first time, glancing an indignant look on his unknown rival, Burton found the stranger had grasped him affectionately by the hand, and recognised in him his only brother !

Twelve years had passed since their young hearts were severed.—Engaged in the service of their country in different hemispheres, and different professions, they were each ignorant of those details with which the reader is acquainted, all which were now rapidly explained. Could Hervey then hesitate to relinquish his pretensions to a hand—to him valueless ; since the heart, which should have accompanied it, was—his brother's ?

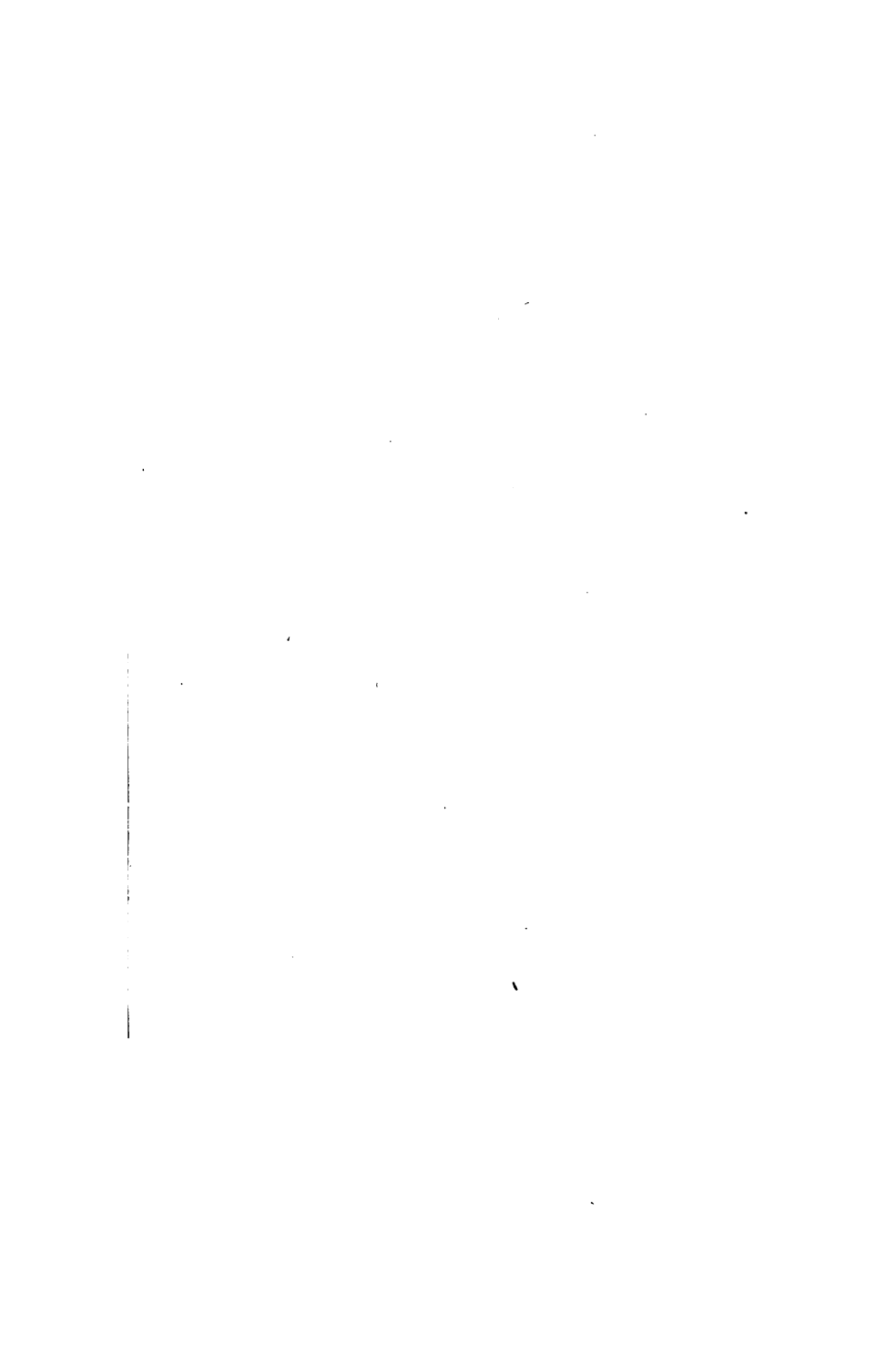
Although the ceremony was postponed, they were soon after united ; and Hervey insisted on contributing half of his splendid fortune as Emily's marriage portion ; determining to return again to the Indies, in hopes to dissipate amidst the bustle of professional life, regrets which he foreboded were too deep ever to be obliterated ; and resolving, for her sake, to die a bachelor.

The letter of the commodore having obtained publicity, Doctor Styles prudently declined the preference Mrs. Crank had given his addresses ; while her medical suitor openly congratulated himself on being released, by her ingratitude, from his plight to one, whom the now deceased veteran's will had left a mere dependant on the bounty of a son-in-law she hated, and had so reiteratedly injured and insulted.

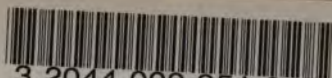
Defeated in all her manœuvres, the saintly dame appealed at first to her pride for support under these multiplied mortifications. With this class of Protestant sectarians, however, Auricular Confession is almost as religiously and strictly observed, as among Roman Catholic devotees ; and, in thus communing with a Band-Brother, she has since admitted " all these humiliations were a just punishment for her indulgence in *creature-love*, and that she could clearly trace the finger of Providence through them all."

Possibly so will the Reader.

THE END.







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